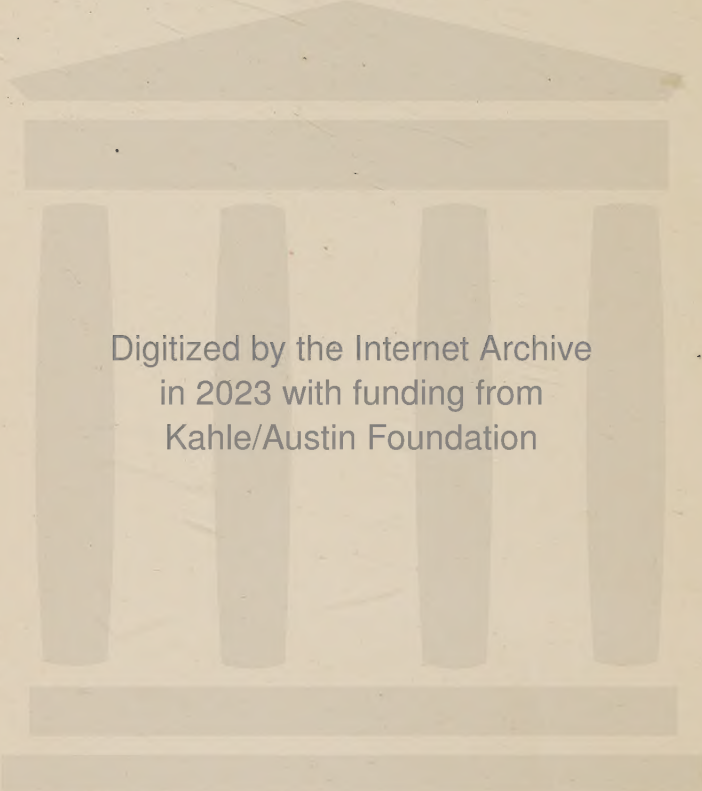


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(Cairo Museum.)

Probably the oldest statue in the world. It represents a Village Chief. Was found in a tomb at Sakkara. Belongs to the Fourth Dynasty, and is not far from five thousand years old.

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SELECT NOTES.

A COMMENTARY ON THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS FOR 1907.

The Beginning of Mankind.

The Beginnings of God's Chosen People.

The Beginnings of the Hebrew Nation.

GENESIS TO SAMUEL.

THE TEXT IN THE AUTHORIZED AND REVISED VERSIONS, ACCORDING
TO HOLMAN'S SYSTEM.

THE BASIS FOR ALL GRADES OF TEACHING.

EXPLANATIONS OF THE TEXT. INDUCTIVE STUDIES OF THE LESSONS. LIGHT FROM MANY SOURCES.
LIBRARY REFERENCES, FOR FURTHER LIGHT FROM BIBLICAL, LITERARY, AND SCIENTIFIC SOURCES.
REFERENCES TO PAINTINGS AND PICTURES. SUGGESTIVE ILLUSTRATIONS.
BROAD VIEWS OF THE HISTORY, MAKING ONE CONSECUTIVE STORY.
THE HEART OF THE LESSON. SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.
PLANS OF THE LESSONS. MAPS, CHARTS.
PICTURES. CHRONOLOGICAL TABLES.

BY

REV. F. N. PELOUBET, D.D.,
and PROF. AMOS R. WELLS, M.A.

11029

THIRTY-THIRD ANNUAL VOLUME.

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THIS VOLUME PRESENTS THE BASIS OF TEACHING FOR ALL GRADES.

Its purpose is to furnish for teachers of all grades in the Sunday school, and for the older scholars, that knowledge of the Scriptures taught which must underlie all good teaching even of the youngest scholars; and to suggest the practical applications and the illustrations, some of which will aid the teaching of each grade in impressing the lesson on mind and heart. Its object is the "*stimulating* rather than the *superseding* of thought." It presents the basis of correct interpretation, of knowledge of the facts, of statement of principles, of legitimate inferences, on which the teacher may securely stand and adapt his instruction to the particular grade he is teaching.

USEFUL FOR ALL SYSTEMS.

This volume can be made the greatest aid available for teaching lessons on Old Testament studies, as guided by other systems presented to the Sunday school. These do and must, of necessity, take up the same Scripture characters and events. But none of them have such aids as this volume gives to teachers, and yet which teachers need in order to make their work most effective.

PICTURE WORK FOR THE SCHOLARS.

One of the most helpful ways of interesting a class is by means of small pictures which can be shown to the class or distributed to each scholar.

Never have there been so many and such good helps as to-day from art.

Mr. Ruskin says that "great nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts,—the book of their deeds, the book of their words, and the book of their art. No one of these books can be understood unless we read the two others."

Some classes have made books on the lessons, by means of the penny pictures placed in the scrap albums (10 cents each, plus 4 cents postage if sent by mail), both furnished by W. A. Wilde Company. A list of these pictures adapted to the lessons of this year is given on pages eleven and twelve. By writing on the opposite page something about the events described in the pictures, or cutting out the Bible verses from the quarterly and pasting them in, and by adding smaller pictures from the quarterly or any magazine, the lesson will be more easily and permanently remembered.

In addition to this have the children use maps as described below and mark on them the places where the events and the pictures belong.

There are few methods by which the teacher can so impress the facts of the early history in the Bible as by these means.

TRAVELING IN THE OLD WORLD LANDS BY MEANS OF THE STEREOSCOPE.

There are no pictures which give so life-like a representation of the places where Old Testament history was lived, as the stereographs taken on the spot.

If any one wishes to realize this fact, or get others interested in it, let him first put into his stereoscope a few of the pictures which Underwood and Underwood (Fifth Avenue and 19th Street, New York) have provided, showing the same objects, as the moon, a bunch of flowers, a portrait of a person, first without stereoscopic effect and then with stereoscopic effect. The change is amazing when seen for the first time.

There are fine stereographs of Egypt, Palestine, Babylonia, Syria, the lands that are prominent in this year's lessons.

But the most important step made to aid in the use of photographic illustration is the patent map system which goes with each collection of the Underwood pictures. The stereographs are numbered, and on the accompanying map the same number is placed at the point from which the view was taken, and from which red lines are drawn enclosing the space included in the view. Thus it is with every view. Carefully studying the map, and facing in the direction indicated by the map, we go over the whole land, and see it just as if we were traveling in the land itself.

Thus with these stereographs and the penny pictures we can follow the lines of travel over which Abraham went from Ur, and his movements over Palestine, the journeys of Jacob and Joseph. Moses, the movements of armies, the activities of the judges.

MAP WORK FOR THE LESSONS.

In connection with pictures of events and places map work is of great advantage.

1. The class can make maps out of paper pulp, and mark on them the journeys and the places mentioned in the lessons, and the noted cities or places connected with them.

2. They can color the Bailey Series of Outline Maps illustrating Biblical history. Of this series of six maps with nine key maps, three maps with the corresponding five key maps, belong to this year's lessons. They show the early Hebrew world, the Sinai peninsula, and Palestine. They can be colored to show the nations, the physical features, location of places, and journeys. This can be done in the school hour, at home, or at special gatherings of the class.

Large size, 12 cents a dozen, 65 cents a hundred. Small size, 10 cents a dozen, 45 cents a hundred. With explanatory folder. By Albert E. Bailey, head-master of Allen School.

Published by W. S. Kilburn, 125 Summer Street, Boston.

3. Raised maps exactly adapted for this purpose can be colored according to the various countries, and the names of places written upon them. These can be obtained of the publisher, W. B. Harrison, 47 Broad Street, New York, from 5 cents up according to size.

4. The most interesting series of all is Rev. Milton S. Littlefield's historical series of sixteen outline political maps, covering the whole Old Testament, by periods; showing the sweep of events by indicating the successive boundary lines of the countries mentioned, and the rise and fall of nations. These maps are to be colored by the scholars themselves according to a consistent color scheme, thus forming a pictured history of Israel, with the surrounding nations and influences at each period. The first four of these series cover the periods of this year's lessons. The Jews are always represented by red,—a line for Abraham's journeys, a broader red line for the march through the wilderness, the land occupied by Israel in Joshua's time, and in the period of Judges and Samuel, also in red. The Egyptians are always in one color, the Midianites, the Syrians, the Philistines, each in its own color through the series.

These maps can be obtained for 1 cent each, or 60 cents per hundred, by sending to Rev. Milton S. Littlefield, pastor of First Union Presbyterian Church, corner 86th Street and Lexington Avenue, New York City.

OLD TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY.

I. CREATION OF MAN TO THE DELUGE.

USSHER FROM THE HEBREW.	HALES FROM THE SEPTUA- GINT.	EARLIEST SECULAR HISTORY.	
		<i>Egypt.*</i>	<i>Babylonia.*</i>
	B. C.		
THE CREATION (in the be- ginning)	B. C.		
Adam and Eve.....4004	5411		
The Fall....."	"		
Birth of Cain....."	"		
Birth of Abel....."	"		
Murder of Abel.....3875			
Banishment of Cain....."			
Birth of Seth.....3874	5181		
Death of Adam.....3074	4481		
Translation of Enoch.....3017	3914		
Birth of Noah.....2948	3755		
THE DELUGE.....2348	3155		
		B. C.	B. C.
		Earliest calendar date.....4241	First King of Babylon— before.....4500
		Menes, beginning of Egypt- tian Dynasties.....3400	Sargon I. (?).....3800 or 3400
		First to Eighth Dynasty3400-2445	Second Dynasty of Ur.....3000
		Sesostris I.....1980-1935	Sargon I. (?).....2800
		Thutmose II, 18th Dy- nasty (Exodus?).....1501-1447	First Dynasty of Babylon.....2454
		Tel-el-Amarna letters 1500-1450	Hammurabi and his code.....2342
			Amraphel of Gen. 14: 1 or according to Hommel.....1947

REMARKS. — Dates are from Breasted, History of Egypt. * Dates from Roger's Babylonia.

The Chronology of the Old Testament, as given in the Hebrew text, is represented with much accuracy by the marginal dates inserted in many editions of the Authorized English Version. These dates, reduced to system by Archbishop Ussher (*Annales Veteris Testamenti*, 1650), were first added to the English Bible by Bishop Lloyd, in the great edition of 1701.

The dates of Archbishop Ussher for this period are convenient for keeping the succession of events, but are not authoritative, as is agreed even by the most conservative scholars. They are only one of several possible arrangements. Opinions of chronologists as to the "era of Creation" vary indeed by many centuries.

The probabilities from geological facts, and the inferences from Egyptian and Babylonian civilization, place the date of the beginning of the human race hundreds, perhaps thousands of years earlier. In fact, the question of date is very uncertain, and is insoluble at present.

Prof. John D. Davis, in his *Dictionary of the Bible* (Presbyterian), suggests that the names in the list of patriarchs in Genesis 5 may be understood as individuals, and their families spoken of collectively, and the longevity is the period during which the family had leadership, as Israel denotes the patriarch and his descendants. Thus the list would run thus: (1) Adam. Year 1. The family of Seth originated when Adam was 130 years old. Adam and his direct line were at the head of affairs 930 years, when they were superseded by (2) Seth and his family, A. M. 930, who were at the head of affairs for 912 years; and so on through the list. Thus "the years from the Creation of Adam to the Flood would be 3225." But this may be greatly modified at different points.

II. THE DELUGE TO THE EXODUS.

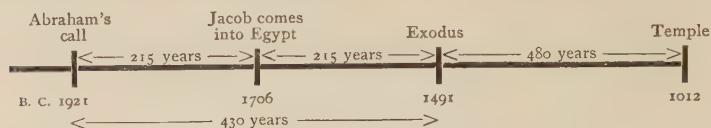
USSHER.				CHRONOLOGICAL CHIMES.
2348	THE DELUGE			Egyptian and Babylonian
2347-8	The covenant with Noah	Armenia.		B.C.
2247	Confusion of tongues	Babylonia.		Hammurabi code 2300 or
1998	Death of Noah	Arabia.		2000.
1996	Birth of Abram at Ur	Chaldea.		Sesostris of Egypt, 1980.
1926	Abram moves from Ur to Haran	Mesopotamia.	B. C.	
1921	The call of Abram	"	1921	
1921	Abram and Lot move to Canaan.	Canaan.		
1918	Abram and Lot separate	"		
"	Lot goes to Sodom	Sodom.		
"	Abram settles in Hebron	Hebron.		
1913	Lot carried away captive by Chedorlaomer ..	Sodom.		
"	Lot rescued by Abram	Near Damascus.		
1912	The covenant with Abram	Hebron.		
1910	The birth of Ishmael	"		
1897	The covenant renewed	"		
"	Abram's name changed to Abraham	"		
"	Sarah's name changed to Sarah	"		
"	Abraham entertains three angels	"		
"	Abraham intercedes for Sodom	"		
"	The escape of Lot	Sodom.		
"	The destruction of Sodom	"		
1896	The birth of Isaac	Moab.		
1894	Hagar and Ishmael sent away	"		
1871	The sacrifice of Isaac	Moriah in Jeru- salem.		
1860	The death of Sarah	Hebron.		
1857	Marriage of Isaac and Rebekah	Lahai Roi.		
1837	Birth of Jacob and Esau	Beersheba.		
1822	Death of Abraham	"		
1804	Esau sells his birthright	Lahai Roi.		Thutmose I., 1557-1501.
"	Isaac's prosperity	Gerar.		Thutmose II., 1501-1477.
"	The covenant confirmed	Beersheba.		(Exodus ?)
1760	Jacob steals Esau's blessing	"		
"	Starts for Padan-aram	"		
"	Jacob's vision at Bethel	Bethel.		
1753	Jacob marries Leah and Rachel	Padan-aram.		
1752 to	Jacob's children (except Benjamin) born ..	"		
1739	Jacob returns to Canaan	"		
"	Wrestles with the angel	Penuel.		
"	Jacob's name changed to Israel	"		
1729	Birth of Benjamin	Bethlehem.		
"	Death of Rachel	"		
"	Joseph's dreams	Hebron.		
"	Joseph sold into Egypt	Dothan.		Tel-el-Amarna letters, 1500-1450.
1728	Joseph a slave of Potiphar	Egypt.		
1718	Is thrown into prison	"		
1716	Death of Isaac	Hebron.		Ramses II., 1292.
"	Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams	Egypt.		
"	Is made ruler over Egypt	"		
"	The seven years of plenty begin	"		
"	Birth of Ephraim and Manasseh	"		
1709	The seven years of famine begin	"		
1707	Joseph made known to his brethren	"		
1706	Jacob moves to Egypt	"		
"	He and his family settle in Goshen	"		
1689	Jacob's death	"		
1635	Joseph's death	"		
1571	Birth of Moses	"		
1531	The exile of Moses	Arabia.	1491	
1491	THE EXODUS	Red Sea.	B. C.	
2348	—	The Period, 857 years	—	to 1491
or				
2348	—	The Period, 1048 years	—	1300
			The 430 years according to others.	
			Brugsch.	
			Mahler.	
			Price.	
			1300	1300
			1300	1335
			1300	1280

REMARKS.—The two principal points on which there is a marked difference of opinion in relation to this period are: (1) The date of the Exodus; (2) the period over which the 430 years of Ex. 12: 40 and Gal. 3: 17 extends.

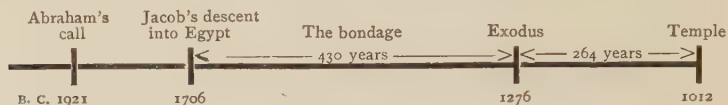
"The sojourning of the children of Israel, which they sojourned in Egypt, was 430 years." The Septuagint says "in Egypt and in the land of Canaan." That is, the 430 years covers the whole period from Abraham's entrance into Canaan to the Exodus, with which agrees Paul's statement in Gal. 3: 17, that from the covenant with (or call of) Abraham to the giving of the law (less than a year after the Exodus) was 430 years. In Gen. 15: 13, 14, it is said that they should be strangers in a strange land, and be afflicted 400 years, nearly the same as Ex. 12: 40. But, in very truth, the children of Israel were strangers in a strange land from the time that Abraham left his home for the promised land, and during that whole period of 430 years to the Exodus, they were nowhere rulers in the land.

Another reason in favor of this view is the difficulty of arranging any other system of chronology that will agree with the Biblical statements. In 1 Kings 6: 1, it is stated that there were 480 years from the Exodus to the building of the temple.

Starting with B. C. 1012 as the date of the temple, which cannot be more than a few years out of the way (not more than thirty-seven years according to the Eponym Canon), we obtain the following dates:—



If the 430 years were wholly spent in Egypt, the dating would be somewhat in this manner:—



It does not seem probable that the Israelites could have been so long in Egypt.

The present tendency of modern scholarship is to accept the late date of about 1300 B. C. for the Exodus, Ramses II. as the Pharaoh of the oppression, and his son Merneptah (Mernephtah) as the Pharaoh of the Exodus. Prof. Edward L. Curtis, in *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, says that "the Exodus can in no case be placed earlier than after the reign of Ramses II.," but adds in a note that since that statement was in type (1898), the new inscription of King Merneptah may require the assignment of the Exodus to an earlier period. And Prof. James Orr, in *The Expositor* for March, 1897, argues stoutly for Thutmose (1501-1447) and against Ramses (1292-1225).

It is impossible as yet to obtain certainty as to these early dates. Prof. Karl Marti, in Professor Cheyne's *Encyclopedia Biblica*, states that the earliest date certain beyond doubt in the chronology of the Old Testament is the year 854 B. C., the date of the battle of Karkar, when Ahab was defeated by Shalmaneser II.

III. FROM THE EXODUS TO THE CONQUEST.

PERSONS	EVENTS	DATE B. C. (USSHER)	PLACE
	EXODUS	APRIL, 1491.	
TRAINING IN THE WILDERNESS.....1491-1451. 40 years.			
Moses.	Giving of the manna	1491, May	East of Gulf of Suez, the western branch of Red Sea. Sinai, a high mountain in Arabia.
	The pillar of fire	" "	
	The Ten Commandments given	" "	
Aaron.	The golden calf	" July	Wilderness of Arabia between the two branches of the Red Sea.
	The tabernacle set up	1490, March	
	The ceremonial law given	April, May	
Joshua.	Nadab and Abihu	" "	Kadesh.
	The wanderings in the wilderness	1491-1451	
	New start for Canaan	1452, April	
Caleb.	Waters from the rock	" "	Meribah.
	Death of Aaron	" summer	
	The fiery serpents	" September	
	Balaam's blessing	" autumn	The Arabah.
	Death of Moses	1451, February	Moab.
			Mt. Nebo or Pisgah.
THE CONQUEST.....1451-1427. 24 years.			
Joshua.	Passing over Jordan	1451, April	At the fords opp. Jericho.
	The fall of Jericho	" "	
	Defeat at Ai	" "	
Caleb.	Reading of the law at Ebal and Gerizim	1451, early summer	Vicinity of Ai. Near Shechem.
	The conquest of Canaan	1451-1443	
	Joshua renewing the covenant	1427	
	The death of Joshua	" "	Throughout Palestine. Shechem. Timnath Serah.

1491

— The Period, 64 years — to 1427.

REMARKS.—The exact chronology is very uncertain during this whole period. There is a wide difference of opinion among scholars, and the latest Bible Dictionaries are unwilling to furnish even conjectural dates for most of the events. It seems, therefore, more helpful to the practical study of this period to give the dates in the margins of our Bibles, with the understanding that they are not authoritative, but give the general order and arrangement of events, and are as good as any that can be obtained.

IV. THE RULE OF THE JUDGES.

JUDGES	EVENTS	Years	DATE B. C.	PLACE
	The oppression of Chushan-Rishathaim, from Mesopotamia, during the last years of Joshua.	8	1427	Palestine.
1	<i>Othniel</i> , son-in-law of Caleb. Rest.	40	1387	Othniel lived near Hebron.
	Oppression by the Moabites.	18		
2	<i>Ehud</i> . Rest.			Ehud in the region of Jericho.
3	<i>Shamgar</i> , who in these years by irregular acts, like those of Samson, saved the people from the Philistines.	80	1289	Shamgar in the south-west.
	Oppression by Jabin, King of Canaan, with 900 chariots of iron.	20		
4	<i>Barak</i> , with <i>Deborah</i> . Rest.	40	1229	Kadesh of Naphtali in the north; west of Lake Merom.
	Oppression by Midianites.	7		
5	<i>Gideon</i> . Ruth. Rest.	40	1182	Moreh in the plain of Jezreel, southern part of Galilee.
6	<i>Abimelech</i> .	3		Shechem.
7	<i>Tola</i> . Rest.	23	1156	Mount Ephraim.
8	<i>Jair</i> . Rest.	22	1134	Gilead, east of Jordan.
	EAST ISRAEL. Oppression of Amorites.	18		WEST ISRAEL. 12 <i>Eli</i> . 1154-1114. 13 <i>Abdon</i> .
9	<i>Jephthah</i> . Gilead. Rest	6		So. WEST ISRAEL. 14 <i>Samson</i> . 1116-1096.
10	<i>Ibzan</i> . Bethlehem. Rest.	7		15 <i>Samuel</i> . 1094-1094. Partial Rest.
11	<i>Elon</i> . Zebulun. Rest.	10	1094	
1427 — The Period, 332 years — to 1095.				

REMARKS.—THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES. According to 1 Kings 6: 1, there were 480 years between the Exodus and the commencement of the temple in the fourth year of Solomon's reign. Deducting from this the 40 years in the wilderness, 25 years of Joshua in Canaan, and 20 or 40 for Saul's reign, 40 for David's reign, and 3 years of Solomon's reign, the period of the Judges would be 480 — 148 = 332 years (or 480 — 128 = 352 years) including the judgeships of Eli and Samuel up to the beginning of the reign of Saul. Of this about 280 years belong to the book of Judges. But if we add together the numbers given in Judges, they amount to 410 years. For this and other reasons it is entirely probable that "the oppressions and deliverances were not successive, but, in part, synchronous. They were, in fact, without exception, local struggles; and it is not only conceivable, but highly probable, that while one part of the land was enjoying security under its judge, other tribes were groaning under the foreign yoke." — *Professor Moore*. While several of the events were thus occurring at the same time in different parts of the land, in other cases the judges ruled practically over the whole. "The judges formed temporary heads in particular centers, or over particular groups of tribes, — Barak, in the north of Israel, Gideon, in the centre, Jephthah, on the east of Jordan, Samson, in the extreme southwest." — *Professor Driver*.

REFERENCE BOOKS.

Books concerning the early portions of the Old Testament, and the allied subjects and investigations have multiplied with great rapidity during the last few years, more than in any previous period of our history, and more than those concerning any other part of the Bible, excepting only the Life of Christ. Here has been the great battleground between the Old and the New, the Conservative and the Radical. Upon its science has shed its light, the earth has yielded up fresh monuments and inscriptions more ancient than have hitherto been known. Scholars of great ability on either side have sent forth books and articles almost in showers. For instance, it is said that in reply to Professor Delitzsch's two lectures of 30 pages each on "Babylon and the Bible" there had appeared, up to May, 1904, 1,350 small articles, more than 300 lengthy papers, and 28 brochures, in Germany alone.

It will be possible, therefore, to give here only a few of the later and more important volumes, and such only as are in English, and can be of use to intelligent teachers who wish to know the trends of thought in the Biblical world.

It will be noticed also that books in favor of the results claimed by the higher critics are more numerous in English than those which would moderate or antagonize their claims, as

is natural when newer views are being promulgated; but books which investigate and oppose many of their claims have been multiplying much more rapidly within the few years since our lessons last discussed the early books of the Bible.

COMMENTARIES.

Genesis, Critically and Exegetically Expounded, Prof. A. Dillmann, D.D., 2 vols., \$6.00 (Scribner's), 1897.

A New Commentary on Genesis, Prof. Franz Delitzsch, D.D., 2 vols., \$6.00 (Scribner's), 1889.

Expositor's Bible, Genesis, Prof. Marcus Dods, D.D., \$1.50 (Armstrong), 1888. Also the volumes from *Exodus* to *Samuel*.

The International Critical Commentary, volumes on Numbers (Professor Gray), Deuteronomy (Professor Driver), Judges (Professor Moore), and Samuel (Prof. H. P. Smith), \$3.00 net per volume (Scribner's). (The volume on Genesis by Professor Cheyne is not yet issued.)

The Book of Genesis, with introduction and notes, Prof. S. R. Driver, \$4.00 (Gorham, N. Y.), 1904.

The Cambridge Bible, volumes on Joshua, Judges, and Samuel, 60 to 90 cts. a vol. (Macmillan). (The volumes from Genesis to Deuteronomy are not published.)

Professor Jacobus and Professor Bush, on Genesis, though old, have a real value of interpretation, with more flesh on the bones than most later commentaries. So Cook's *Bible Commentary*, Ellicott, Keil, Lange, *Pulpit Commentary*, Adam Clark, Alford on Genesis and Exodus.

Gospel of the Pentateuch and David, Charles Kingsley, \$1.25 (Macmillan).

The World before Abraham, with introduction to the Pentateuch, Prof. H. G. Mitchell, \$1.75 net (Houghton & Mifflin), 1901.

Handbooks for Bible Classes, on Genesis, etc., Professor Dods, 60 cts. (Scribner's).

Notes on the Hebrew Text of Genesis, G. J. Spurrell, \$3.10 (Oxford University).

Biblical Encyclopedia, a collection of bright sayings and illustrations upon the whole Bible, 5 vols. (Barton). Edited by Rev. Geo. M. Adams, D.D., \$4.00 per vol., 1903, or \$15.00 the set.

GENERAL HISTORIES OF THE PERIOD.

Beginnings of Hebrew History, Prof. Charles Foster Kent, Ph.D., of Yale, \$2.75 net (Scribner's), 1904.

Edersheim's *Bible History* in 7 vols.

Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, 6 vols. Various publishers and prices.

Stanley's *History of the Jewish Church*. New edition, 3 vols., \$2.00 each (Scribner's).

Cornill's *History of the People of Israel*, \$1.50 (Open Court Publishing Company), 1898.

Prof. Henry Preserved Smith, D.D., *Old Testament History*, \$2.50 net (Scribner's), 1903.

Professor Sayce's *Patriarchal Palestine*, \$1.50 (Young), 1895.

Prof. George S. Goodspeed's *History of the Ancient World*, \$1.50 (Scribner's), 1904.

Dr. Lyman Abbott's *Life and Literature of the Ancient Hebrews*, \$2.00 (Houghton & Mifflin), 1901.

Kitto's *Daily Bible Illustrations*.

Syllabus of Old Testament History, Prof. Ira M. Price, D.D., \$1.50 (Revell), 1891.

Outlines for the Study of Biblical History and Literature, Prof. F. K. Sanders, D.D., vol. IX., \$1.25 (Scribner's), 1905.

Contemporary History of the Old Testament, Prof. Francis Brown, LL.D. (Scribner's), 1906.

Short History of the Hebrews, Prof. R. S. Ottley, \$1.25 (Macmillan), 1901.

Early History of Syria and Palestine, Prof. L. Paton, \$1.25 (Scribner's), 1901.

Babylonia and Assyria, Prof. R. W. Rogers, Ph.D., 2 vols., \$5.00 (Eaton & Mains), 1901.

A History of Egypt, 200 illustrations and maps, Prof. James H. Breasted, \$5.00 net (Scribner's), 1905.

LIGHT FROM THE MONUMENTS, ETC.

The Code of Hammurabi, translated and edited by Prof. Robert F. Harper, Ph.D., \$2.00 (University of Chicago), 1904. Vol. II., with its discussion is not out at the time of this writing.

The Codes of Hammurabi and Moses, Prof. W. W. Davies, Ph.D., 75 cts. (Methodist Book Concern).

The Laws of Moses and the Code of Hammurabi, Stanley A. Cook, M.A., \$2.25 (Black), 1903.

Ancient Hebrew Tradition as Illustrated by the Monuments, Prof. Fritz Hommel, D.D., \$1.75 (Young), 1897.

Authority and Archeology, Essays on the Relation of Monuments to Biblical and Classical Literature, edited by D. G. Hogarth, *Essays by Various Authors*, \$5.00 (Scribner's).

Tell-el-Amarna Letters, translated into German by Hugo Winckler, and thence into English by J. P. Metcalf.

Tell-el Amarna Tablets, Col. C. R. Conder, LL.D., 3s. 6d. (Palestine Expense Fund), 1893.

Light from the East, or the Witness of the Monuments, by C. H. Ball, \$6.00 (Young), 1899.

Library of Ancient Inscriptions, Prof. F. K. Sanders, \$3.50 (Scribner's), 1906.

History, Prophecy and the Monuments, J. F. McCurdy, 3 vols., \$3.00 a volume (Macmillan), 1896.

Monuments and the Old Testament, Prof. Ira N. Price, \$1.25 (Christian Culture Press), 1899.

Fresh Light from the Ancient Monuments, Prof. A. H. Sayce, \$1.20 (Revell).

The Old Testament in the Light of the Historical Records of Assyria and Babylonia, Prof. Theophilus G. Pinches (S. P. C. A.), 1902.

Babylonian and Assyrian Literature. "Best collection in existence of translations from the Monuments." Robert Harper, \$6.00 (University of Chicago Press).

Bible Accuracy, as Shown by the Monuments, Col. C. R. Conder.

Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament, Prof. E. Schrader, 2 vols. (Williams & Norgate), 1885-8.

Recent Discoveries and the Bible, Urquhart, 8 vols., \$1.25 each, \$8.00 for set (American Bible League), 1900.

Ancient Records of Egypt, James Henry Breasted, 4 vols., \$15.00 (University Press, Chicago), 1906.

BIBLE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT FROM THE MORE ADVANCED HIGHER CRITICAL POINT OF VIEW.

Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament, Prof. George Adam Smith, D.D., \$1.50 (Armstrong), 1901.

Bible: Its Origin and Nature, Prof. Marcus Dods, \$1.00 (Scribner's).

Narratives of the Beginning of Hebrew History, and Historical and Biographical Narratives, Prof. Charles Foster Kent (Scribner's), 1905, \$2.75 a vol.

Biblical History of the Hebrews, Canon F. T. Foakes-Jackson, B. D., (Arnold, London), 1904.

The Book of Genesis in the Light of Modern Knowledge, Rev. Elwood Worcester, D.D., \$3.00 (McClure).

The Genesis of Genesis, Prof. Benjamin W. Bacon, \$2.50 (Student Publishing Company).

Genesis Printed in Colors, Prof. E. Cone Bissell (Belknap, Hartford).

Constructive Studies in the Priestly Element of the Old Testament, President William R. Harper, \$1.00 (Chicago University Press), 1902.

Christian Faith in an Age of Science, Prof. William North Rice, D.D., \$1.50 (Armstrong), 1903.

Legends of Genesis, Prof. Hermann Gunkel, \$1.00 (Open Court Publishing Company), 1901.

The Documents of the Hexateuch, Rev. W. E. Addis, part 1, \$3.00, part 2, \$4.00 (Putnam's), 1903.

The Divine Library, Prof. A. F. Kirkpatrick, \$1.25 (Macmillan), 1902.

The Old Testament and the Christian Church, Prof. John E. McFadyen, \$1.50 (Scribner's), 1903.

The Pentateuch and Joshua, I. Gibson (Jacobs), 1896.

The Bible a Missionary Book, Robert F. Horton, D.D., \$1.00 (Oliphant & Pilgrim Press), 1905.

Reasons of the Higher Criticism of the Hexateuch, I. Gibson, 50 cts. (H. C. Jacobs), 1897.

The Churchman's Introduction to the Old Testament, Rev. Angus M. Mackay, B. A., \$1.50 (Methuen & Co., London), 1901.

- Messages of the Bible*, edited by Professors Sanders & Kent. Vol. I., *The Prophetic and Priestly Historians*, and vol. II., *Lawgivers*, \$1.25 each (Scribner's), 1901-3.
- Early Hebrew Story: Its Historical Background*, J. P. Peters, \$1.25 (Putnam's).
- Old Testament and the New Scholarship*, J. P. Peters, \$1.50 (Methuen & Co.), 1901.
- Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, Prof. S. R. Driver, D.D., \$2.50 (Scribner's), 1901.
- The Higher Criticism of the Hexateuch*, Prof. Charles A. Briggs, D.D., \$2.50 (Scribner's).
- Who Wrote the Bible?* Rev. Washington Gladden, D.D., \$1.25 (Houghton & Mifflin).
- Seven Puzzling Bible Books*, Rev. Washington Gladden, D.D., \$1.25 (Houghton & Mifflin), 1897.
- Bible History*, after the Results of Historical Criticism, Pastor X. Koenig, \$1.00 (McClure), 1905.
- The Temple Bible Series*, 30 to 60 cts. (Dent, London; Lippincott, Philadelphia).

BIBLE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT FROM A MORE CONSERVATIVE STANDPOINT.

- Origin of the Pentateuch in the Light of the Ancient Monuments*, Prof. Henry A. White, D.D., \$2.00 (B. F. Johnson Publishing Company), 1894.
- The Problem of the Old Testament* "considered with reference to recent criticism," Prof. James Orr, \$1.25 net (Scribner's), 1905.
- The Bible and Modern Criticism*, Sir Robert Anderson, K. C. B., \$1.50 (Revell), 1903.
- The Bible: Its Structure and Purpose*, John Urquhart, S. B. A. (Gospel Publishing House), 1904.
- The Other Side of Evolution*, Rev. Alexander Patterson, 60 cts. net (Winona Publishing Company).
- Monument Facts and Higher Critical Fancies*, Prof. A. H. Sayce, LL.D., 75 cts. (Revell).
- Pseudo-Criticism*, Sir Robert Anderson, 75 cts. (Revell).
- The Divine Origin of the Bible*, R. A. Torrey, D.D., 50 cts. (Revell).
- Veracity of the Hexateuch*, Pres. S. C. Bartlett, LL.D., \$1.50 (Revell), 1897.
- Higher Criticism and the Pentateuch*, Prof. W. H. Green, D.D., \$1.50 (Scribner's).
- Are the Critics Right?* Wilhelm Moller, \$1.00 (Revell), 1899.
- The Bible in the Light of To-day*, Charles Croslegh, D.D., \$3.00 (S. P. C. K.), 1896.
- The Integrity of Scripture*, John Smith, D.D., \$1.25 (Revell), 1903.
- The Mosaic Authorship of the Pentateuch*, Macdill, \$1.50 (U. P. Bd. of Publication).
- Higher Criticism and the Verdict of the Monuments*, Prof. A. H. Sayce, LL.D. (Society for Promotion of Christian Knowledge).
- Law of Moses and the Higher Criticism* (Eyre & Spottiswoode), 1894.
- The Old Tradition and the New*, a small booklet by Prof. Willis J. Beecher, D.D., President Theological Seminary, Auburn, N. Y.
- Higher Criticism and the Average Man*, Howard A. Johnston, \$1.00 (Revell), 1902.
- Books of the Old Testament vs. Their Sources*, Prof. Willis K. Beecher, *Bibliotheca Sacra*, April, 1899.
- The Unity of Genesis*, Prof. Henry Greene.
- Broader Bible Study*, Rev. Alexander Patterson, text-book for Bible classes, 75 cts. (G. W. Jacobs).

BIOGRAPHY.

- Famous Men of the Old Testament and Famous Women of the Old Testament*, M. B. Wharton, D.D., \$1.50 each (Treat).
- Bible Characters*, Rev. Alexander Whyte, D.D., \$1.25 (Revell), 1897.
- Heroes of Israel*, Prof. W. G. Blaikie, \$1.50 (Nelson), 1894.
- Heroines of the Bible in Art*, C. E. Clement, \$2.00 (Page), 1900.
- Representative Men of the Bible*, 2 vols., George Matheson, D.D., \$1.75 each (Armstrong), 1902, 1903.
- Nameless Women of the Bible*, Rev. Theron Brown, 75 cts. (American Tract Society), 1904.
- Old Testament Characters*, Geikie (Pott & Co.).

Old Testament and Modern Life, Stopford A. Brooke, D.D., \$1.50 (Dodd & Mead), 1896.

Hebrew Ideals, Rev. James Strachan, M.A., 60 cts. (T. and T. Clark), 1902.

BIBLE STORIES FOR CHILDREN.

The Story of the Bible, finely illustrated, J. L. Hurlbut, D.D., \$1.25 and up (Winston), 1904.

The Bible for Children, selected and arranged by Prof. Francis Brown, \$3.00 (Century Company), 1903.

On Holy Ground, Bible Stories, beautifully illustrated with more than 500 pictures of Bible lands, W. L. Worcester, \$3.00 (Lippincott), 1904.

Telling Bible Stories, Louise Seymour Houghton, \$1.25 net (Scribner's), 1905.

Landscape Bible, 3s., 6d and up, Eyre & Spottiswoode (Young & Co.).

Old Testament Bible Stories, arranged by Prof. R. G. Moulton (Modern Readers Bible Series), 40 cts. (Macmillan).

The Story Bible, Margaret E. Sangster, is illustrated, 12 colored decorative drawings, 582 pp., \$2.00 net (Moffat, Yard & Co., N. Y.), 1905.

The Bible Beautiful, Estelle M. Hurlb, \$2.00 (Page & Co.), 1905, is a history of Biblical art, with fine illustrations, for adults rather than for children.

WILDE'S BIBLE PICTURES.

A selected list of Wilde's Bible Pictures of Old Testament subjects illustrating the lessons for 1907. These pictures are classified according to subjects, and should be ordered by number. Price one cent each, postpaid. No orders for less than ten received.

The Creation of Light.

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Creation of Animals.

555. Brill Paola, Rome.

Creation of Eve.

566. Doré.

Expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden.

346. Doré. 1833-1883.

557. The Sacrifice of Cain and Abel.

The Murder of Abel.

558. Doré.

Cain the Wanderer.

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Return of the Dove to the Ark.

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Jacob Wrestling with the Angel.

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Jacob Mourns for Joseph.

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Despair of Jacob.

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Joseph and Pharaoh's Dream.

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Joseph Selling Corn.

571. Barth, Breemburg, Vienna.

Joseph Making Himself Known to His Brethren.

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Jacob Going Down to Egypt.

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Jacob Going to Recover His Son in Egypt.

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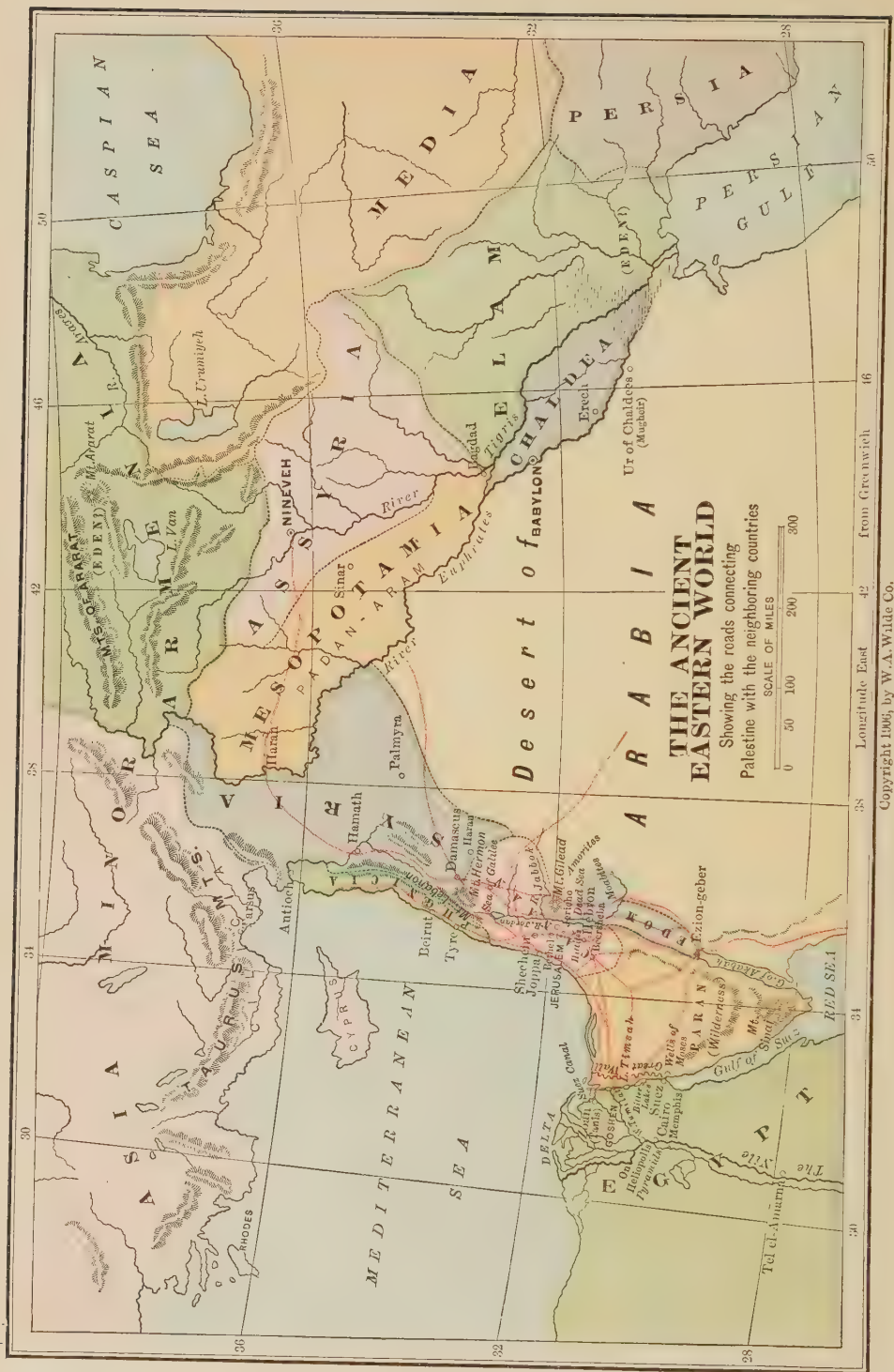
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| <p><i>Moses Drawing Water for Jethro's Daughters.</i>
Frescoes in Sistine Chapel, Rome.
573. Sandro Botticelli.</p> <p><i>Moses and the Burning Bush.</i>
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381. Vienna. D. Feti.</p> <p><i>Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh.</i>
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577. Paul Veronese.</p> <p><i>Departure of the Children of Israel from Egypt.</i>
578. Artist unknown.</p> <p><i>Israelites Passing through the Red Sea.</i>
579. Raphael.</p> <p><i>Giving of the Law on Mount Sinai.</i>
391. Doré. 1833-1883.</p> <p><i>Moses' Descent from Sinai.</i>
389. Doré. 1833-1883.</p> <p><i>Israelites Worshiping the Golden Calf.</i>
580. Raphael.</p> <p><i>Moses Breaking the Tables of the Law.</i>
404. Doré. 1833-1883.</p> <p><i>Israelites Receive the New Tables of the Law.</i>
405. Julius Von Schnorr.</p> <p><i>Moses.</i>
403. Rome. Michael Angelo. 1475-1564.</p> <p><i>Moses and the Law.</i>
581. Phillippe de Champaigne. 1602-1674.</p> <p><i>The Tabernacle, with outer altars, priests, musicians, etc.</i>
386. Photographed from model.</p> | <p><i>Return of the Spies from the Land of Promise.</i>
406. Doré. 1833-1883.</p> <p><i>Death of Korah Dathan and Abiram.</i>
582. Doré.</p> <p><i>The Brazen Serpent.</i>
390. Doré. 1833-1883.</p> <p><i>Moses Lifting Up the Serpent in the Wilderness.</i>
407. Artist unknown.</p> <p><i>Moses' Successor.</i>
408. Julius Von Schnorr.</p> <p><i>The Hebrews Passing over Jordan.</i>
388. Doré. 1833-1883.</p> <p><i>The Angel Appearing to Joshua.</i>
409. Doré. 1833-1883.</p> <p><i>Walls of Jericho Falling.</i>
410. Doré. 1833-1883.</p> <p><i>Fall of Jericho.</i>
583. Raphael.</p> <p><i>Gideon Chooses His Soldiers.</i>
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412. Doré. 1833-1883.</p> <p><i>The Gates of Gaze Taken Away by Samson.</i>
584. Francois Verdier. 1651-1730.</p> <p><i>The Death of Samson.</i>
585. Doré. 1833-1883.</p> <p><i>Famine in Samaria Relieved.</i>
587. Artist unknown.</p> <p><i>Ruth and Naomi.</i>
414. Philip H. Calderon.</p> <p><i>Return of Naomi.</i>
415. Artist unknown.</p> <p><i>Boaz and Ruth.</i>
416. Doré. 1833-1883.</p> <p><i>Ruth Gleaning.</i>
586. Thomas Stothard.</p> <p><i>Samuel.</i>
417. Sir Joshua Reynolds. 1723-1792.</p> |
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A SERIES OF VIEWS FROM NATURE.

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| <p>175. Egypt. General view.</p> <p>178. Egypt. Pyramids and inundated palms.</p> <p>179. Egypt. Pyramids and Sphinx.</p> <p>180. Egypt. View on the Nile, north from the Temple of Isis (Desolation).</p> <p>181. Egypt. Heliopolis. Obelisk of the Temple of the Sun.</p> <p>206. Fords of the Jordan.</p> <p>207. River Jordan. Pilgrim bathing-place.</p> <p>209. Jericho and Mount Quarantana.</p> <p>210. Jericho from the Plains.</p> <p>225. In the Vale of Shechem.</p> | <p>226. Shechem. General view.</p> <p>237. The Samaritan Pentateuch.
The Book of the Law.</p> <p>238. A Bedouin and His Daughter.</p> <p>246. A Troop of Camels and Their Driver.</p> <p>247. A Bedouin Family in Their Tent.</p> <p>252. Family of Bedouins at a Meal.</p> <p>305. Benias. Source of the Jordan.</p> <p>312. Samaria. Well of Jacob.</p> <p>551. Hebron. Abraham's Oak.</p> <p>552. Hebron. General View.</p> |
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Wilderness of
Shur or Etham

Wilderness of
Paran

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RED SEA

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PALESTINE

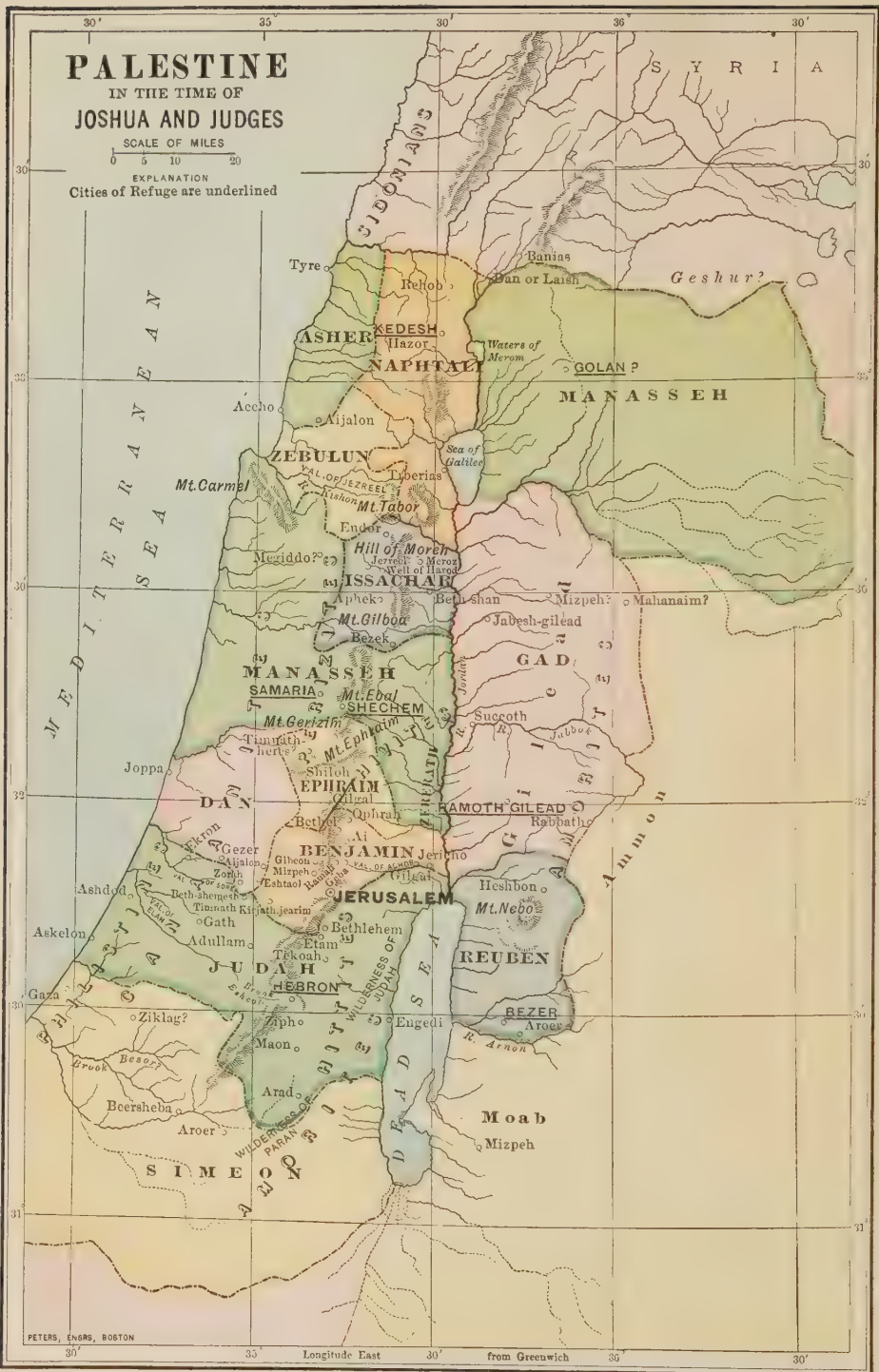
IN THE TIME OF
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SCALE OF MILES

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EXPLANATION

Cities of Refuge are underlined



FIRST QUARTER,

JANUARY 6 TO MARCH 31, 1907.

FROM THE CREATION TO JACOB.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

CONCERNING THE EARLY HISTORY IN THE BIBLE.

On this period of Bible history there has been so much scholarly investigation, such earnest discussion, new light from so many sources, such wide-spread interest in new views, such upheaval of faith and its foundations in many minds, and such relief from doubt and perplexity in others, that it seems imperative once for all to present the case to teachers for their consideration.

What attitude shall they take for themselves?

What shall they teach as to these things? To older classes? To the children?

I can present the case only as it stands in my own mind after years of thought and research, with nearly all the important books on these subjects on both sides at my command, with considerable opportunity of personal discussion with scholars, and with a sincere desire and, I hope, open mind to know the truth, for the sake of my own life and faith, as well as for the help of those for whose aid I write.

THREE GREAT SOURCES OF NEW LIGHT. In addition to such light as comes freshly from geography, from psychology, from sociology, from the study of ancient peoples, and from art, there are three great sources of aid in understanding the Scriptures, which, while not at all new, have marvelously developed in the last few years, and become more widely known.

FIRST. THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE AS LITERATURE, of which Professor Moulton is the apostle, and the *Modern Reader's Bible* is the chief exponent, and the *Revisions*, and such translations as the *Twentieth Century New Testament* (new edition), Weymouth's *Modern Speech New Testament*, and Ballentine's *Modern American Bible*, are partial examples. The clear recognition of the different forms of literature in the Bible, and the literary form in which each part of it is written, whether history or drama, or poetry or dialogue, or metaphor, or parable, or story, sheds a wonderful light on portions of the Bible, like sunlight on a well-cut gem, obviates difficulties, corrects interpretation, and clarifies our views of truth. For there is no essential truth which is not presented in a variety of forms, showing it from different points of view. A long-ago Massachusetts governor would not have quoted Satan's words in Job, "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life," as the teaching of God, if he had noted the literary character of the book. I can never express the help I have gained from this kind of Bible study.

SECOND. Fresh light is continually coming from the discovery of monuments and inscriptions long buried in the earth, but now finding a resurrection, and telling us what the ancient peoples had themselves written. The latest and most important are the Hammurabi monument and the Tel-el-Amarna letters, which will be referred to in their place in the lesson course, together with many others.

The above sources bring light, but very few serious difficulties for the Sunday-school teacher.

THIRD. THE HISTORICAL STUDY OF THE BIBLE, popularly known as the *Higher Criticism*, as distinguished from the criticism of the text of the Bible. This has been a very disturbing element, both in the church and the individual soul.

WHAT IS THE HIGHER CRITICISM? "It is the study of the Bible as history and literature." It is a phrase used to express all investigations respecting the genuineness,

authenticity, integrity, historic nature, mode of composition, and literary character of the Bible.

THE TWO SCHOOLS. All Bible scholars are "higher critics" in some degree, but for convenience, as tested by the conclusions to which they have come, they may be roughly divided into two schools: (1) Those who have made the more radical changes in their views of the Bible history, commonly known as "Higher Critics"; and (2) The "Conservatives," or "Historical Critics," who use the same facts and the same historical methods, but come to different conclusions, much nearer the commonly accepted views of the truth of the Bible history. But it must always be borne in mind that there are almost as many gradations of opinion, as the three thousand shades and tints of color; and that there is a wide space of opinion where they overlap.

THE RESULTS REACHED BY THE "HIGHER CRITICS" so far as relates to the period of the Bible we are now studying.

These critics fairly well agree on certain main lines of conclusion, but the difference in degree, and emphasis, and working out of their theories, between the most radical and the most moderate, varies almost as heaven and earth. It is never fair to place them all under one category. We are now considering the results as held by the more moderate of the radical school of critics, men of the highest Christian faith and character.

1. They claim to find in the Old Testament history three or four narratives, written at different dates, interwoven together as we have them, at a late period of Israelitish history, but including many ancient documents; as we sometimes see the four Gospels interwoven into one continuous narrative or diatessaron.

2. That these narratives they have separated, and enabled each to tell its own distinct story.

3. That thus arranged there are many contradictions between the different accounts, and errors of statement, which do not for the most part appear such in the continuous narrative.

4. They have made a revolutionary reconstruction of the history of Israel and its development, very different from that which appears in the continuous narrative as arranged by the Jews in our present Scriptures. They claim to have made a new Bible of the Old Testament, better and truer than that of the old arrangement.

5. They regard the early narratives as consisting more or less largely of legends and myths and traditions, not as real history, but often with a substratum of history.

6. The lateness of the date at which they regard the various narratives as finally written, favors the unreliability of the stories as true history.

7. They emphasize the fact that all parts of the Scriptures are not equally inspired by the same kind of inspiration, or "equally Divine."

8. This requires a new view of the method of inspiration different from what has been held, as to its admittance of human errors on account of the human instrumentality through which God speaks, while the truths taught are divine.

9. But they believe in a real inspiration and a real revelation from God, as Professor Budde, the eminent German critic, writes that as for himself his "belief in a genuine revelation of God in the Old Testament remains rock-fast." They teach that the legends, myths, and traditions of the far-off past were transformed and inspired by God to convey great religious truths. The history of Israel is the record of "a divine guidance in the strictest sense supernatural and unique."

10. The miraculous is not excluded, but is minimized. There is real divine intervention, but the early miraculous stories are by that very characteristic rendered doubtful as to their historic truth.

11. They have given a great impetus to Bible study especially in institutions of learning, both by their direct teaching, and by exciting new enthusiasm in those who oppose their theories.

12. They claim that while the faith of not a few has been shaken by these new views, yet "that those who have been led into unbelief by modern criticism are not to be compared in number with those who have fallen from faith over the edge of the opposite extreme;" that great numbers are helped by it out of their doubts and perplexities occasioned by "its discrepancies, pitiless tempers, rigorous laws, atrocities narrated and sanctioned by its laws," and its seeming conflict with modern science. They claim that all these difficulties are removed by the conclusion that in the early portions of the Bible "we are handling not history, but tradition."

THE MODERATE CONSERVATIVE SCHOOL are also higher critics (for all Bible students of every degree have used and do use the higher critical method); but they reject as unproved and untrue the main conclusion of what is popularly called the Higher Criticism.

Agreeing in this main position they vary one from another in many points and degrees. THE COMMON GROUND, WHEREIN THE TWO SCHOOLS AGREE. It is necessary to survey the common ground in order to avoid the injustice, so continually committed, of attaching to either school, as peculiar to that school, many things which are common to both.

1. Both accept and use the historical method, and know that it has shed a great deal of light on the Bible and its interpretation.

2. Both are equally open-minded and desirous of finding the truth, "though the sky should fall, sun, moon, and stars and all."

3. In both are great and strong scholars. It is a false claim that only those who take certain views are scholars.

4. Both accept every fact brought to light by modern research, however different the inferences they may draw from it.

5. They both accept the conclusion that different parts of the Bible are of different values, and that a quotation in the Old Testament from ancient, political records has not the same authority or kind of inspiration as a saying of Christ or a sermon by a prophet.

6. They both believe in a progressive revelation of divine truth and a gradual development of the history of Israel under divine guidance.

7. They both believe in the inspiration of the Bible and a divine revelation; and that there are several ways in which prophets are inspired of God.

8. They both believe in the general fact of the composite nature of the Pentateuch, and that the early parts of the Bible contain various narratives and documents, as do the Gospels, and all history in some form or another; while the two schools differ as to the place and quality of the documents.

9. Both believe that God can use all the various forms of literature, — poetry, story, allegory, parable, as well as history, prophecy, and statements of fact, — to convey his revelation of truth to man, however much they may differ as to the category to which any particular portion may belong.

10. All are looking for new light to break forth upon and from the Bible as claimed the old Puritan, John Robinson. To the question Professor Cheyne asks, "Has the clock stopped in Bible criticism?" the answer of both schools would be an emphatic "No." But the conservatives think the higher critics have sometimes moved the hands of that clock faster than the Sun of Truth moves, and they would like to keep the hands with the sun.

11. Both believe that there have been revisions, editings, translations, even as we have seen all through the history of the Bible, down to our latest revisions.

WHEREIN THE CONSERVATIVE SCHOOL DIFFER FROM THE OTHER "HIGHER CRITICS."

1. As a general statement, they do not accept their revolutionary conclusions as to the development of Israel and the legendary nature of the early stories.

2. They believe that the Bible, as now arranged, more truly expresses, as a whole, the real historic religious development of man and of Israel, — one divine plan running through the whole, — a divine revelation early in the history of man, but growing fuller and brighter as the centuries moved on and the people could receive it, while along with this the written history records the tortuous and often reversionary struggles of the people under the divine training to live up to it; very much as the history of Christianity records the struggles and training of its adherents to live up to the original revelation in Jesus Christ, with all their reverses, neglects, and moral falls.

3. They do not accept the revolutionary conclusions of the "Higher Critics," because they are so largely founded on assumptions and conjectures, without sufficient basis of fact in the meager notices in the history, and on a selection of certain ones from the many possible inferences, when other inferences are equally logical, and seem to them more true.

Because on this account an atmosphere of untruth is thrown over much of the Old Testament; direct historic statements are so readily assumed to be untrue; and faith in the Bible is undermined.

Because sufficient account is not taken of history and literature and the facts of life, where conclusions can be tested, and where similar conjectures are shown to be often untrue; "too large conclusions are based on very uncertain foundations."

Because in comparing the stories of this period with the legends and myths of other nations, sufficient account is not taken, in the argument, of the vast difference in the two kinds of stories, and treating the Israel stories, which in the words of Gunkel generally accepted, "are perhaps the most beautiful and most profound ever known upon earth," in the same way as myths and legends which have no such characteristics but are full of errors.

4. It is quite possible, even probable, that these pure and beautiful stories were the original facts; and the Babylonian and other legends are their degenerate children. For "it is well known," says Prof. Louis H. Jordan, "that the oldest portions of the sacred books of Egypt, of Persia, and of India, are the most monotheistic."

So Prof. Robert W. Rogers, LL.D., speaking of the Old Testament stories, writes, "Is the Hebrew narrative borrowed from the Babylonian story? So many think. But the facts before us seem to demand another explanation."

So Prof. Ira M. Price, in the *Monuments of the Old Testament*, of the stories of Genesis and the inscriptions on the monuments, — that almost all scholars are now turning to the theory that their likeness is due to a common inheritance as the most plausible solution of the question; and that "the Genesis record is the purest . . . and the nearest to what we must conceive to have been the original form of these traditions."

5. It seems improbable that any editor would put together in one narrative such contradictory accounts as the separation of the stories produce; for nearly all the contradictions which throw a doubt over the truth of the stories, are not in the narrative as it stands, but are made by separating the narrative into different stories and then contrasting them, as if each of the separated stories was the whole of that story. History is not made in that way. Take, for instance, Tatian's Diatessaron, for which see Lesson V.

6. As to the doubts, perplexities, and moral difficulties which the "Higher Critics" remove from the younger generation, they are all, or nearly all, equally removed by the positions held as common ground by both schools, without involving them in the atmosphere of unreality and legend which the "Higher Criticism" throws around them.

7. The conservatives make some distinctions which are largely neglected by the other school. They accept the fact that the higher critical changes "leave the essential doctrines undisturbed, and the eternal verities untouched. Every religious truth, every moral principle, every vital evangelical conception stands just where it has always stood and just where it will always stand." But they also know what all life and experience teaches that a true story exemplifying any virtue has far more character-forming power than any legend or myth teaching the same truth. The history of Washington and his hatchet teaches the virtue of truthfulness, whether it be fiction or fact. But tell the boy that the story is generally believed to be mythical, and the inspiring power is very small compared to what it would be could the whole greatness and heroism of Washington stand behind the story as a fact. A real Christ has a thousandfold more character-forming power than an imaginary picture of Christ that had never become real. Show that the Old Testament stories are myths and legends, and you have diminished the value and power of the roll-call of heroes and heroic deeds in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.

8. It is not fair to make the moderates of either school responsible for the radical-new, or the ultra-old, opinions of some of their adherents. It is not right to brand as enemies of the Bible those who hold its inspiration as truth according to the higher critical method of using it; and equally unworthy to brand as "pious barbarians" (Gunkel) or mere traditionalists and unscholarly those who cannot accept the higher-critical conclusions. Neither one can understand the other unless he can place himself at the other's standpoint.

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS' PERSONAL ATTITUDE TOWARD THESE QUESTIONS. Very few teachers can make a thorough study of these perplexing questions, being busy people in other directions. But many are confronted with these new views and these puzzling questions, and must hold some working attitude with regard to them.

1. Be receptive, open-minded to all truth from every source, let all the windows of your soul be open in every direction. The bee sucks honey from every flower, even the poisonous ones.

2. Recognize the fact that the battle is still going on. The discussion is not concluded, the questions are not settled, and, therefore, it is better for most people to wait quietly and restfully for further light. There are sure to be reactions from extremes. But only scholars can carry on the discussions. Others can best make haste slowly, rather than accept every result stated as a final truth. New light is still coming in every year, which must compel more or less change in the conclusions. Hence it is best for us not to be too dead sure. As one of the chief higher critics said to me, it is only second-rate scholars who are so infallibly certain. The whole field of the past is strewn thick with dead theories and systems and philosophies, scientific, educational, religious, which once flourished like green bay trees. This is not a case where "one is infallible and the other always right."

I can well remember the time when geologists believed in what is called the cataclysmic theory of the earth's changes. Then came the uniformitarian theory, and one had almost to give up his claim to scholarship who did not accept that theory. Now both

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

theories are accepted as true in a measure, but neither as the sole explanation, and the inferences from each separate one are discredited.

3. There is a resting-place of peace, in what is termed above, *the common ground*, where one can see the battle progressing and hear the noise in the distance, and await the results in faith and hope, unhindered in daily duties, undisturbed in faith in the divine revelation, while letting the rays of all really new light shine through the windows of his soul.

4. The Christian needs to live, move, and have his being in the atmosphere of the character-forming truths of the Bible, which include by far the greater part of it. While he visits and explores all as thoroughly as possible, chiefly that he may clarify, invigorate, make more life-giving the atmosphere in which he lives.

5. Remember that discussion is education. "Agitation," said Wendell Phillips, "is not a disease nor a medicine; it is the normal state. Agitation is not the cure, but the diet of a free people."

"The ever-restless ocean is our emblem, which, girt within the eternal laws of gravitation, is pure only because never still."

Freedom of discussion is the atmosphere wherein truth thrives with vigor and gains its victories. "To sit on the safety-valve is simply to invite an explosion."

"Protestantism owes its very existence and certainly its dominating power among men to its absolutely untrammelled study and exposition of the Scriptures."

All history tells us that in every period of conflict there stands forth after the battle some truth purer, clearer, shining down the ages like a "beautiful tall angel;" and this resultant truth will now, as in the past, help to build the jasper-walled City of God.

WHAT SHALL THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER TEACH ABOUT THESE THINGS. 1. It is plain that no person should teach what he does not believe, or what is not true.

2. It is equally plain that he should not teach as true, what is yet unsettled in his mind after faithful study.

3. At the same time in older classes where these questions come up, he ought to present them as under discussion, as accepted by many good men, and the reasons he has for and against. But always in such a way as to retain faith in the Bible as true and inspired of God.

4. The questions are beyond the comprehension of children, and to them they should be presented as they are given, with their teachings, with no reference to disputes and questionings.

5. The case is different with those who have been puzzled by the discussions and problems which meet them on all sides. It is true that "they should not be taught as true what they must unlearn within ten years," but that refers equally to the radical as to the conservative teachings. Many changes will come to both sides within that time, as there has in the past ten years. It is wiser to bid them to wait before being too sure, to show them the "common ground," and to point out to them the way of faith in God's Word, whatever should prove to be the final outcome.

6. The main teaching should be upon the character-forming truths, those which guide the daily life, and train the soul to virtue, and inspire to a noble life. So it is in literature. It is far more important to teach Shakespeare's works than to decide whether he wrote any particular play; and to teach Homer than discuss whether there are two or more Homers, or only one, and point out which portions are assigned to each, except very briefly in their bearing on the meaning of poems.

Let scholars busy themselves with such questions as freely as they will.

But the Sunday-school teacher in the Sunday-school hour has little time for those things, and must attend to his main business of training the youth to become earnest, intelligent Christians, victorious over evil, growing like their Lord, and abounding in every good word and work.

LESSON I. — January 6.

GOD THE CREATOR. — Genesis 1: 1-25.

COMMIT vs. 1-3. READ John 1: 1-5.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*

GEN. 1: 1.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Compare the first chapter of Genesis with John 1: 1-5; Psalms 19: 1-6; Acts 14: 17; Romans 1: 19, 20, and state what Creation reveals concerning God.

Search the Scriptures for the statements made about the nature and character of God; his unity, creative work, wisdom, knowledge, power, love, etc., placing the

statements under each head, and making a summary of the results, and comparing them with the definition of God in the Westminster Assembly's Catechism.

Catechism. — "God is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth."

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Set the children to thinking, by asking them the previous Sabbath to observe God's works all around them, and come to the class prepared to report what they have learned about God and his character, — his wisdom, his power, his goodness, etc.

Get them to tell what more Jesus has told us that we need to know — as his fatherhood, love, etc.

Travelers' Club and Picture History. — Supply the scholars with Wilde's scrap-books made for this purpose, and let them begin an illustrated journey through the countries to be studied during the year; writing the names of the places, tracing the journeys on maps, outline or colored, or drawn by themselves, and put in each lesson such pictures as belong to it. Penny pictures of many kinds can be obtained. Pictures often come in magazines, quarterlies, and various other places. The searching for these, and being always on the watch will greatly increase the interest.

Or the plan may take the form of

An Illustrated Bible History.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: God our Creator Revealed in His Works.

I. IN THE BEGINNING, GOD (v. 1).

The creator of all things.
The unity of God.
The personality of God.
God our Father.

II. THE STORY OF CREATION.

The work of each of the six days.
What the works of God teach us concerning our heavenly Father.
The right use of nature.

LEARN BY HEART.

Gen. 1: 1-3; John 1: 1-3.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"The spacious firmament on high."
"O worship the King all glorious above."
"Lord of all being, throned afar."
"Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty."

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Genesis. — Origin, creation, beginnings.

The Author is unknown, but the book belongs to what was called the books of Moses.

Composite. — At whatever date this book was finally put together as we now have it, it clearly embodies a number of distinct documents woven together in one narrative.

The Date is unknown, either of the original documents or the final revision, which was probably late.

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The book of Genesis.
What we learn about God from nature.
What more does Jesus teach about him?
What duties we owe to our creator.
The seventh day.
Man made in the image of God.
Man made of dust and spirit.

REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Most of the *Books and Commentaries* on Genesis are given under the *Bibliography* above.

Dana's *Genesis and Science*. Boardman's *Studies in the Creative Week*. The translations of the Babylonian legends of the creation in Professor's Sanders' *Library of An-*

cient Inscriptions, and other books on LIGHT FROM THE MONUMENTS. Guyot's *Creation*. Professor Rice's *Christian Faith in an Age of Science*. Sir William Dawson's *Origin of the World according to Revelation and Science*. Professor Mitchell's *World Before Abraham*.

ILLUSTRATIVE POEMS.

Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book V., "Adam's Morning Hymn," and Book VII. Faber's

"Oh, how the thought of God attracts." Susan's Coolidge's "The great round world is full of things." A curious poem on the development of man, by Charlotte Perkins Stetson, "There was once a little animal no bigger than a fox." Thomas Whytehead's poems on *The Days of Creation*, particularly the one "This world I deem but a beautiful dream." A number of poems in the *Poet's Bible*. Coleridge's "Hymn before Sunrise in the Vale of Chamouni." Spenser's "Hymn of Heavenly Love."

1. In the ¹beginning ²God created the heaven and the earth.

¹ John 1: 1, 2.

² Psa. 8: 3; 33: 6; 89: 11, 12; Acts 14: 15; Col 1: 16, 17.

I. IN THE BEGINNING GOD.—V. 1.

1. In the beginning. "Before anything was made that was made," as in John 1: 1 and Heb. 1: 10. "The beginning of the history that follows, as *en archê* (the Greek equivalent) meant absolutely of the beginning of existence." — *Delitzsch*. God is self-existent, from eternity, but the beginning of his creation of our universe is here described. **God.** Hebrew, *Elohim*. The root is one denoting power, plural "powers." "The plural form is not merely a plural of majesty, but indicates the manifold powers and attributes residing in the one Being who is the object of awe and worship. When the name is given to false gods, the *verb* is in the plural; when, as here, to the one true God, the *verb* is, with rare exceptions, in the singular." — *Perowne*. Thus distinguishing between the polytheism of the heathen and the monotheism of the Jews. "In heathenism it is an external (numerical), in Israel an internally multiplying (intensive) plural." — *Delitzsch*. **Created.** Hebrew, *Bârâ*. "This word is never used except of a divine act. . . . It expresses the origination of the absolutely new." — *Delitzsch*. "The word is never followed, like other words meaning 'to form,' 'to fashion,' and the like, by the accusative of the material out of which the thing is fashioned. . . . God called all that is into existence." — *Perowne*. **The heaven and the earth.** "The whole universe as it appears in its present order." *Perowne*. This verse is "the briefest possible statement to the effect that the present frame of things owes its existence to the divinity worshiped by the Hebrews." — *Prof. H. C. Mitchell*.

NOTE 1. Geology confirms the statement that visible nature had a beginning. "A system of progress or development in the earth as much implies that it had a beginning, as that in any plant or animal. . . . If this is true of one sphere in space, we may rightly take another step and assert that *the universe had its beginning*." — *Prof. Wm. North Rice's Revision of Dana's Geology, 1903*.

NOTE 2. Science confirms the first verse of the Bible, that the origin of all material nature is a personal God. "Creation by a divine method, that is, by the creative acts of a Being of infinite wisdom, whether through one fiat or many, could be no other than perfect in system . . . no other than the very system of evolution that geological history makes known." — *Rice's Revised Dana's Geology, 1903*.

"The principle of causality forbids us to believe in an uncaused beginning. It compels us, therefore, to believe in the existence of something eternal and self-existent wherein lies the ground of all other existence. If there ever was a fool who said in his heart, 'There is no God,' . . . that particular species of fool has become extinct." — *Professor Rice in Christian Faith in an Age of Science*.

LESSONS FOR TO-DAY. "The opening sentence of the Bible is, perhaps, the most weighty sentence ever uttered. It is a declaration on nearly all the great problems now exercising scientists and philosophers — God, creation, the whole, eternity, cause, time, space, infinity, force, design, intelligence, will, destiny." — *Austin Bierbower*.

1. The unity of God. There is one God, and only one. In the earlier theological treatises, up to a very late date, one of the first things was to prove by all known arguments the unity of God. In our day science has settled the question. The unity of creation proclaims the unity of God. So far as geology has revealed the past, so far as the telescope

and spectrum analysis, which have marvelously widened our knowledge of late years, can tell us, — all parts of the universe are constructed on one plan and of the same materials. The same light shines everywhere; the laws of gravitation act everywhere; one great plan is revealed through countless ages.

2. The everlasting God is a personal God, with all the characteristics which make our souls personal, and how many more we know not. He has will, and wisdom, and affections, and power. He is "infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth."

3. This Creator God is our Creator and our Father. If we sum up in one ideal all that has been written or imagined, or found in all history, of the best that belongs to earthly fatherhood, we can get some faint idea of what the fatherhood of God means to us. Compare the first words of the Lord's Prayer, and the first sentence of the Apostles' Creed.

4. The fact that we have a God and Father brings with it certain duties, — obedience, love, worship, prayer. Compare the first four commandments.

5. It also brings great privileges. Communion with such a God, the constant presence of such an ideal, has a mighty character-forming power. There is comfort, hope, strength, life, all good, in the consciousness that the infinite God is our Father, guide, and friend. See the AGELESS HYMNS. Amid the evils surrounding us, so many, so powerful, it is well to know that a living God is over all; that this is no Chance World like that described in Hafed's Dream. (See Todd's lectures to children.) No ungoverned world like that pictured in Zola's *La Bête Humaine* as a railway train dragged by an engine whose driver has been killed, dashing at headlong speed into the midnight. "The train is the world, we are the freight, fate is the track, death is the darkness, God is the engineer, — who is dead"; nor like the God described in Omar's *Rubáiyát*. All these would land us in the dungeon of Giant Despair.

" 'There is no God,' the foolish saith,
But none, 'There is no sorrow.' "

— Mrs. Browning.

NOTE that the First Man needed this truth as much as we do to-day. It is almost beyond belief, beyond conception, that a good God, a Heavenly Father, should create man, his own child, in his own image, and not from the first give him so much knowledge of Himself as he could receive, giving more and more as his powers increased; or that he should leave man in the universe as helpless as a babe, to gradually learn the most fundamental facts of his existence by himself alone. The revelation of a Creator stands in its natural order at the beginning of the Bible, as it does at the beginning of Man.

II. THE STORY OF THE ORDERLY CREATION OF THE WORLD.

A HYMN OF CREATION

A DRAMA OF CREATION

In Six Acts.

A VISION OF CREATION

A PANORAMA OF CREATION

In Six Scenes.

Each of the days is a single Stanza, or Story, or Fact.

Professor Moulton, Delitzsch, and others arrange the "days" in two parallel columns of three each, and note the correspondences.

1. The Making of Light.	4. Lights in the Heaven, Sun, Moon, and Stars.
2. Dividing of Waters from Waters.	5. Animal Life in Water and Air.
3. Dry Land Appears. The Era of Vegetation.	6. Higher Animals on the Land. Creation of Man. Animal Life Feeding on Vegetation.

2. And the earth was ^{without form, waste} and void; and darkness ^{was} upon the face of the deep: ^{1 And the Spirit and the spirit} of God moved upon the face of the waters.

3. ² And God said, ³ Let there be light: and there was light.

4. And God saw the light, that ^{it was} good: and God divided ^a the light from the darkness.

5. And God called the light ⁴ Day, and the darkness he called Night. And ^{the} evening and ^{the} morning, ^{were the first one} day.

¹ Psa. 33: 6.

² Psa. 33: 9.

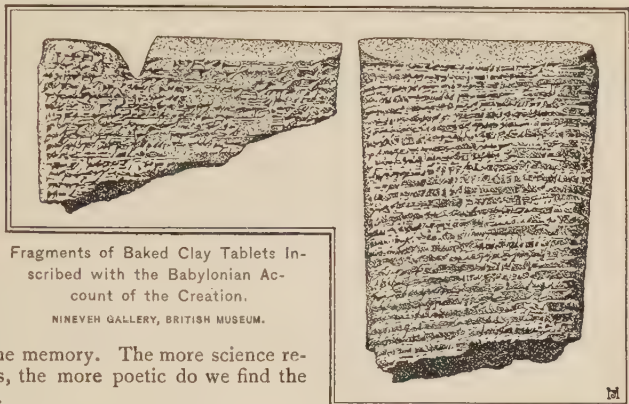
³ 2 Cor. 4: 6.

⁴ Psa. 74: 16.

^a Hebrew, *between the light and between the darkness.*

The story of creation is told in the simplest and briefest and most orderly way, as if to write it indelibly on the mind and memory of man; as, indeed, it has. It gives the impression of an inscription on a monument, as some one has suggested, like the Ten Commandments on the Tables of Stone.

Its poetic form aids the memory. The more science reveals of God's works, the more poetic do we find the acts and facts of God.



Fragments of Baked Clay Tablets Inscribed with the Babylonian Account of the Creation.

NINEVEH GALLERY, BRITISH MUSEUM.

THE FIRST DAY.—Vs. 2-5.

2. **And the earth.** "Earth can here only mean the mass of matter out of which the world was finally created; in other words, chaos . . . the substance of the earth, located where the earth was destined to remain." — *Prof. H. G. Mitchell*. **Was without form, "waste" and void.** "Confusion without order, form, and substance." "The words describe a chaotic condition," "a formless mass." — *Dillmann*. Exactly expressing the scientific nebular hypothesis. **And darkness.** Before motion there was no light. **Was upon the face of the deep.** The Hebrew word "is a poetic word, properly a mass of raging waters, so called from their noise and roaring." — *Gesenius' Lexicon*. It is equivalent to *waters* and to the *earth* described before. **And the Spirit of God.** "The unseen but mighty agency by which creation was wrought." — *Mitchell*. **Moved upon the face of the waters.** "As the bird over her nest, so the all-penetrating Spirit of God moves over the primeval waters, producing therein, or communicating to them, vital powers, and so rendering creation possible." — *Dillmann*.

3. **And God said.** "The creative word of command, the *fiat* of God, that word in which his will is comprised and energized." — *Delitzsch*. **Let there be light.** Nothing is said of the source of light; but light is essentially the same from whatever source.

4. **The light, that it was good.** "By means of this formula . . . the work is expressly recognized as one corresponding to the will of God, perfect, the subject of his pleasure; but at the same time is described as finished and concluded." — *Dillmann*. **God divided the light from the darkness.** "They were to have each its own distinct existence." — *Dillmann*. "Fixed definite limits for their duration." — *Mitchell*.

5. **Called the light Day,** as we do now, to express that part of the time which is filled with light. So **Night** was, and is still, that portion of time covered with darkness. To say that this is the beginning of the alternation of our present day and night is to read into the story what is not there, and to contradict the later statement of the author that that alternation appeared on the fourth day. **And the evening,** the darkness described above,

6. And God said, ¹Let there be a ^afirmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

7. And God made the firmament, ²and divided the waters which ^{were} under the firmament from the waters which ^{were} ³above the firmament: and it was so.

¹ Job 37: 18.
² Prov. 8: 28.

³ Psa. 148: 4.
a Hebrew, *expanse*.

and the morning, the light which followed it, were the first day. R. V., "one day." Day ordinarily means either the time of daylight or the civil day of twenty-four hours, in Hebrew, as in many other languages; but in Hebrew, as in other languages, it frequently is used typically of those periods of which "day" is the best and most natural expression, as in Gen. 2: 4; Isa. 13: 6, the "day" of the Lord; Zech. 4: 10, the "day" of small things; John 8: 56, Abraham saw my "day," where the usual Hebrew word for "day" is used by Delitzsch in his Hebrew New Testament. In all these cases there is the thought of evening and morning, a time of light after darkness. So we speak of the arctic "day" as six months' long. The expression "day" in these cases does not mean any length of time; "day" in John 8: 56 does not mean three years of Christ's ministry, or thirty years of his life; the word "day," in speaking of the arctic summer, is not the equivalent of six months. So the word "day" in this and the following descriptions has no reference to the length of time the process required; just as the "act" of a historical play has no reference to the length of time required by the actual men and women to accomplish what is represented in the act, but only to the time required to represent it.

In whatever way this period was made known to men, whether through Babylonian legend, or by gradual unfolding of the human mind, or by divine revelation, the simplest and most natural way it could be represented to men, or by men, was through some vision, or picture, or scene, seen or described, and this scene, or picture, or vision, or act could best be presented to the common mind by the evening and the morning, one "day." It is not science; it does not "put a geologist's meaning in the word 'day'"; it is not cast-iron logic; but it is literature; it is the simplest, clearest, best possible short statement and representation of a fact. Thus the Babylonian account does not say "days," but puts each day or period on a separate tablet.

SECOND DAY. — Vs. 6-8.

6. Let there be a firmament. Hebrew, *rākia*, from a verb meaning "to beat," "to extend by beating," means "an expanse," "the firmament of the sky or vault of the upper air." — *Dillmann*. It is well translated by our Latin word *firmament*, from "firm," = solid, compact, stable, and hence applied to the sky, "the vault of heaven viewed as something solid and abiding." The appearance of the sky is to-day that of a solid dome, and it certainly is abiding, and we still use the word firmament, and speak of the skies pouring down rain as if "the flood gates" had been opened, in the same poetic forms of expression used of old (Gen. 7: 11; Psa. 104: 3, 13), but that does not imply that we believe there is a solid vault like a molten mirror with literal doors and windows. Even before the time when scholars place the last revision of this account in Genesis, "there grew up among the Hebrews also," says *Dillmann*, "a view of the formation of the clouds and rain from the vapors that rise from the earth, more in accordance with the facts of physical science (Jer. 10: 13; Job 36: 27; Psa. 135: 7)." The fact is that our common every-day language is and has been full of these poetic expressions which no one dreams of holding to the literal derivation of the words, any more than it could be said that when we say "spirit" we mean only "breath" or "wind." Let it divide the waters from the waters. "The unscientific reader would attach an instant and easy meaning to the words 'expansion in the midst of the waters.' And if, having once seized this idea, he proceeded to examine it more accurately, he would perceive at once, if he had ever noticed anything of the nature of clouds, that the level line of their bases did indeed most severely and stringently divide 'waters from waters,' that is to say, *divide water in its collective and tangible state from water in its divided and aerial state; or the waters which fall and flow from those which rise and float.*" — *Ruskin, Modern Painters*, Vol. IV.

7. Made the firmament. By separating the waters as described.

8. And God called the firmament Heaven. And ^{the} evening and ^{there was} morning, ^{were the} second day.

9. And God said, ¹Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry ^{land} ^{land} appear: and it was so.

10. And God called the dry ^{land} ^{land} Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that ^{it was} ^{it was} good.

11. And God said, Let the earth ² bring forth grass, ^{the} herb yielding seed, and ^{the} fruit tree ^{yielding} ^{bearing} ³ fruit after ^{his} ^{its} kind, ^{whose seed is in itself,} ^{wherein is the seed thereof,} upon the earth: and it was so.

12. And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after ^{his} ^{its} kind, and ^{the} tree ^{yielding} ^{bearing} fruit, ^{whose seed was in itself,} ^{wherein is the seed thereof,} after ^{his} ^{its} kind: and God saw that ^{it was} ^{it was} good.

13. And ^{the} evening and ^{there was} morning, ^{were the} ^a third day.

14. And God said, Let there be ⁴lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide ^a the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and ⁵for seasons, and for days and years:

15. ^{And} ^{and} let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.

¹ Job 26: 10; Psa. 33: 7; 95: 5; 104: 9; 136: 6.

² Heb. 6: 7.

³ Luke 6: 44.

⁴ Deut. 4: 19.

⁵ Psa. 74: 17; 104: 19.

^a Hebrew, *between the day and between the night.*

8. Called the firmament Heaven. "The most magnificent ordinance of the clouds." — *Ruskin*. The era of the second day was this necessary preparation for the eras that were to follow. Compare the strikingly picturesque description in Psa. 104: 6-9.

THE THIRD DAY. — Vs. 9-13.

9. Let the waters . . . be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear. A simple fact necessary to the eras of vegetable and animal life.

11. Let the earth bring forth grass, green herbage, fresh verdure, especially the grasses and smaller plants for animal's food, or the beginning of vegetation in general. And God said. "The world of plants originally came into existence through the earth being miraculously fertilized by the Word of God." — *Delitzsch*. While in fact there is no "spontaneous generation," the story is so told as to express some kind of development and evolution with God behind it. **Herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree.** Referring to the whole vegetable kingdom. The statement is that God made all these things without any hint as to how he did it. The vegetable kingdom was the characteristic of this period. To whomsoever or by whomsoever this fact was made known, it was represented as a whole era; like the epoch of spring with all its flowers and trees and fruits. This epoch begins on the 21st of March, but all these developments of spring did not come on that date. The epoch, the era came then. The most natural expression of the coming of the epoch, with all that spring includes in the briefest terms, would be that spring had come. The Genesis story is the most natural expression, in briefest form, to the common mind, in the forms of daily speech, of the advent of the vegetable kingdom on the third day. And this occurred while the mists of the cooling earth were so dense that while there was some light growing brighter, yet no appearance of sun or moon was in the sky. That such must have been true according to the geologic science of to-day, is the statement to me of one of the best biologists in government employ.

THE FOURTH DAY. — Vs. 14-19.

14. Let there be lights in the firmament. The sun, moon, and stars had been created in the beginning, so that this statement cannot refer to their creation, but to their appointment, by becoming visible to their mission to the earth. It is implied that whatever life was upon the earth before this time, existed before the sun was visible through the thick clouds, the waters above the firmament.

16. And God ¹ made ^{the} two great lights; the greater light ^a to rule the day, and ² the lesser light to rule the night: *he made* ³ the stars also.

17. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,

18. ^{And} ^{and} to ⁴ rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that ^{it was} ^{it was} good.

19. And ^{the} ^{there was} evening and ^{the} ^{there was} morning, ^{were} ^{the} ^a fourth day.

20. And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the ^b moving creature that hath ^c life, and ^{let} fowl ^{that may} fly above the earth in the ^d open firmament of heaven.

21. And ⁵ God created ^{the} ^{great} ^{whales,} ^{sea-monsters,} and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their ^{kind,} ^{kinds,} and every winged fowl after ^{his} ^{its} kind: and God saw that ^{it was} ^{it was} good.

22. And God blessed them, saying, ⁶ Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

23. And ^{the} ^{there was} evening and ^{the} ^{there was} morning, ^{were} ^{the} ^a fifth day.

¹ Psa. 136: 7, 8, 9; 148: 3, 5.

² Psa. 8: 3.

³ Job 38: 7.

⁴ Jer. 31: 35.

⁵ Gen. 6: 20; 7: 14; 8: 19.

⁶ Gen. 8: 17.

^a Hebrew, *for the rule of the day.*

^b Or, *creeping.*

^c Hebrew, *soul.*

^d Hebrew, *face of the expanse of heaven.*



The Paleozoic Age.

The Earliest Form of Sea Growth.

16. Now God made, not created, two great lights, which did not exist before on the surface of the world. It was God who (17) set them in the firmament. All of them were God-made. To give light. "Explaining why although the existence of light was not dependent on them, there was more of it when they appeared than when they were invisible." — *Mitchell.*

No words can be found to express more exactly in every-day language to an observer on earth the actual facts that must have occurred.

THE FIFTH DAY. — Vs. 20-23.

20. Let the waters bring forth abundantly. "More correctly, 'Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures.'" — *Peroune.* The first animal life appears here to have been in and through the water.

21. And God created . . . every living creature. For the first time since the original creation in v. 1 is the word "create" used again, asserting that something new — life, was put into creation, which had not existed before. Great whales. "Sea-monsters." Every winged fowl. Birds of all kinds. There is no statement as to the order in which these appeared, only that all these kinds came into existence during this period.

"Nothing is more remarkable than the way in which the first appearance, both of vegetable and animal life, is recorded. Both are ascribed to the voice of God, in both there is an operation upon matter; but the *how* is and must

24. And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after ^{his} _{its} kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after ^{his} _{its} kind: and it was so.

25. And God made the beast of the earth after ^{his} _{its} kind, and ^{the} _{his} cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the ^{earth} _{ground} after ^{his} _{its} kind: and God saw that ^{it was} _{it was} good.

probably for ever remain a mystery. The process is hidden, the result only is given." — *Perowne*.

SIXTH DAY. —

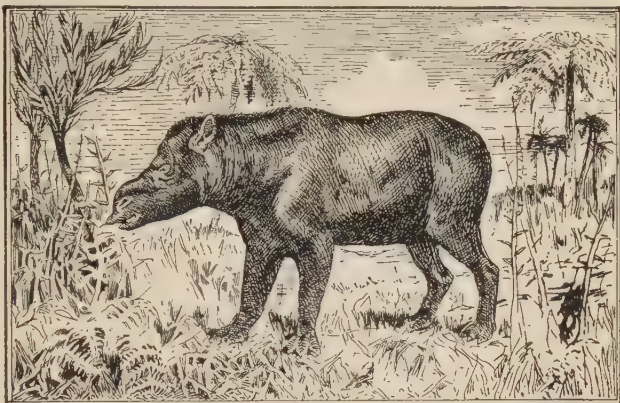
Vs. 24, 25.

After the era of the populating of water and air, came the era of the land animals, mammals.

24. **Let the earth.** The expression implies that God in making these animals used in some way the means already existing. **The living creature.**

"Beings of the same general character as those belonging to the sea, — animals." — *Mitchell*. **Cattle.** "Domestic animals." **Creeping thing.** "Doubtless includes not only reptiles, but all the other smaller animals that move on or near the ground." — *Mitchell*. **Beast of the earth.** Wild animals. The different order in which these three classes are arranged in v. 25, shows that there is no reference here to any order of development; but only an including of all classes under God's creative work. Le Conte, in his geology, says, "that the suddenness of the appearance of mammals is very remarkable. In the lowest tertiary, without warning and without apparent progenitors, true mammals appear in great numbers."

The last work on this day is the creation of Man, "God's noblest work," "Creation's Masterpiece," the lord of all the rest of creation, but also dependent on all that went before. This is the subject of our next lesson.



Mammal of the Tertiary Age.

REMARKS.

1. Lest I should appear partial and biased, it may be well to say that my faith in the Bible as an inspired book would not be destroyed by any disagreement claimed between the two records of Science and Genesis. Devout and earnest believers in the Bible as divinely inspired, are found on both sides of these questions.

2. We are warned to "beware of the siren voice of the harmonizers." The true warning should be uttered against all distortions, either in order to force a harmony, or to force a disagreement to prove that there are different documents. In both history and daily life honesty requires us to harmonize where we can.

3. All are agreed that the Scriptures were not given to teach science, and do not teach science. They do not use scientific language, they do not teach science, but state facts in every literary form, in the common language of daily life. Hence, the varying theories of science do not affect its truth. A good example is the difference between the plain statement that the "sun sets," and the scientific statement about the sun standing still and the earth revolving. Most of the objections made to the accuracy of the Genesis account arise from the disregard of this principle either in regard to geology or language. Ruskin well says (*Modern Painters*, Vol. IV., "Firmament"), "With respect to this whole chapter, we must remember always that it is intended for the instruction of all mankind, not for the

learned reader only; and that, therefore, the most simple and natural interpretation is the likeliest in general to be the true one."

4. Using language in this way, as geologists themselves do in writing for school children, the great periods described in this chapter have their counterpart and their order in the revelations of geology.

Professor Rice, in his latest revision of Dana's school geology, repeatedly gives the general order of development. Plants, rhizopods (the earliest animal life), mollusks, fishes, reptiles, birds, mammals, man. A biologist told me that while plant life and animal life began at nearly the same time, yet as plant life was the sum of fewer qualities than animal life, plant life was lower in the scale than animal life, and before animal life in the sense that animal life directly or indirectly depended on plant life. Professor Rice calls these periods "the reign," or "the era," "the kingdom," "the group" of fishes, of reptiles, etc.; and adds this note: "*These expressions . . . are not to be understood as implying that the several groups of animals mentioned were confined to the era named in connection with them, but only that they were the most characteristic species of the era.*" That note should be understood as belonging to the description of each "day" in the Genesis record, and the word "day" should be interpreted as freely, as are "reign" and "kingdom" without any king, in the common language of a great geologist. Thus the geologist himself sweeps away all the objections which have been made from the discovery of the beginnings of one day or era within the limits of other days or eras. Especially does this apply to the statement that there is no such distinct separation of eras in geologic history as is implied in the distinction of days. Neither is there in what geologists call kingdoms; nor in the procession of the seasons. There is no definite line between spring and summer, or summer and autumn, yet there are distinct seasons, and we rightly name them as such.

I think it would be impossible for any geologist to express in simple language that all could understand the facts as he knows them, more accurately than is done in this Genesis story. There is not one of the positions which Professor Mitchell regards as conflicting with science, that really conflicts with the natural interpretations given above.

5. There is nothing in the story that is not in harmony with the science of biology and with evolution. Professor Mitchell well says, "The author's conception of creation displays a philosophic insight that is extraordinary. Indeed, in its essential features, the unity of Nature, and the gradual origin of things it harmonizes so perfectly with the modern theory that the latter should be regarded as supplemental rather than abrogative of the former." The word "create" is used only of the three points where science acknowledges it cannot penetrate, — the creation of matter, of life, and of man. I asked the best biologist I know, a man of wide reputation, whether, if it could be shown that God put his will into the biological evolution, and made new species, it would be contrary to modern science, and he said it would not.

6. Whence did the writer of Genesis obtain his story? (1) Either from the Babylonians, as many scholars think (for they recorded something of the kind on stone centuries before Christ), transformed and inspired to teach the truth; or, (2) the Babylonian and the many other ancient legends all proceeded from some common origin in some prehistoric account of creation. "Their likeness is due to a common inheritance, each handing on from age to age records concerning the early history of the race." — *Principal Cave*. "To this almost all scholars are turning as the most plausible solution of the question." — *Prof. Ira M. Price*. So Professor Rogers and other scholars.

It does not follow that because these other accounts are legends, therefore the Bible stories are legends. It seems much more natural that the Bible accounts, so perfect, so beautiful, so true, "of all writings known to man, one of the most sublime and beautiful," "having for sublimity, force, strength, and beauty no superior," were the originals. It is almost inconceivable that early man could have originated them. They must have had some historical fact in the early history of the race from which they originated. This fact must have been a revelation to early man.

7. It is hard to conceive of a heavenly Father who would leave his children for uncounted ages, without any clear revelation of himself, as the Creator and God; while it is true that "there can be no religion unless it is believed that there is a God. . . . And to an absolutely silent God, homage must soon cease to be paid." — *Professor Dods*.

LESSONS FOR TO-DAY.

1. For some older scholars one of the chief needs is to settle their doubts as to the Bible as the Word of God, to show them the way out.

2. God's Works are a revelation of himself, as well as his Word. Neither of them can we fully understand without the other. We need to make a study of both.

"Come and wander with me,
Into regions yet untrod,

And read what is still unread
In the manuscripts of God."

3. We learn from God's works of creation something of his wisdom, power, goodness, and love. The more we study them the more we learn to love, to wonder, and adore. This wise and good God is our Father; we look upon his works and say, "My Father made them all." We rest in the love of the Strongest; we trust in the guiding care of the Wisest.

So when God would help Job out of the Slough of Despond into which his sufferings had thrown him, he shows him his character by his works, as if saying to him, If I am so wise and powerful and good in the things you can see, can you not trust me in the things you cannot see.

"I know not where I am going,
But well do I know my Guide."

"The voice that rolls the stars along,
Speaks all the promises."

4. All God's works are full of moral and spiritual teachings. Jesus used them continually to make clear his teachings. So did the prophets. It is a blessed thing for child as well as adult to listen to these voices of Nature, and be led through Nature up to Nature's God.

"The flowers are the alphabet of angels, whereby
They write on hills and fields mysterious truths."

"Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,

Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is."

—Tennyson.

LESSON II. — January 13.

MAN MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD.

Genesis 1: 26—2: 3.

STUDY Gen. 1: 26—2: 25. COMMIT vs. 26, 27.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.* — GEN. 1: 27.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Subject: *Man as the Child of God.* —

From the following texts and their contexts, and from others which you can find, study our relations to God. Show what those relations are, and their bearing upon our duties, our hopes, and our characters. Made in the image of God: v. 26; Gen. 5: 1; 9: 6; Col. 3: 10; James 3: 9. The offspring

of God: Mal. 2: 10; Acts 17: 26, 28; Psalms 100: 3; 1 John 3: 1, 2. A little lower than the angels: Psalms 8: 5, 6. Made to have dominion: v. 29; Psalms 8: 6. The many places where God is called our Father. Passages showing how the moral image may be restored, as Rom. 8: 14; Matt. 5: 9; 1 John 3: 2, 10.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

In the Jewish phylacteries four passages were placed. Two of these (Deut. 6: 4-9 and 11: 13-22) contained the command to *teach the children diligently*. Thus the command to teach the children was placed twice in each phylactery. And the command was four times repeated, twice in

each phylactery to be worn upon the forehead, and twice in that to be worn upon the arm.

That which the phylactery was meant to symbolize should be written on each teacher's heart. The main truths of the lesson should be fixed in the memory early in the week, side by side with the thought of the

children, to gather thoughts and methods of teaching all the week long. And then get the children to talk over the lesson with the family at home. The best opportunity to do this comes when all are studying the same lesson, and the blessing thereof is very great. The lesson of the phylactery should be in letters of gold in every home: "*These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*" So shalt thou be a good parent and a good teacher.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Man: His Nature and Work and Means of Progress.

I. THE SECOND STORY OF CREATION (Gen. 2: 4-7).

The relation of the two stories.

II. THE CREATION OF MAN (Gen. 1: 26, 27; 2: 7).

The body from dust.

The spirit from the spirit of God.

The condition of early man.

The creation of woman.

Is this story history or parabolic representation?

III. LESSONS FOR TO-DAY.

IV. THE DOMINION OF MAN (vs. 28-31).

V. THE SEVENTH DAY (Gen. 2: 1-3).

The means of man's development.

The seventh day hallowed.

The need and the method of the Sabbath.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECISIONS OF MORAL QUESTIONS.

Will I decide to live as a child of God?

Will I decide *now* to cherish his image in my soul?

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Blessed are the Sons of God."

"Children of the heavenly King."

"The earth has grown old with its burden of care."

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 26, 27; Rom. 8: 14-17; Col. 3: 10.

THE SECTION OF THE HISTORY

for this lesson includes the remainder of chap. 1 and the whole of chap. 2.

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Man in the image of God.

The dual nature of man.

The second story of creation.

Man's place in creation.

The condition of early man.

The garden of Eden.

The creation of woman.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The most of the references in the last lesson apply to this also. Professor Rice's *Revision of Dana's Geology*. Drummond's *Ascent of Man*. Story of creation in the "Creation Tablets," given in any of the books on the ancient inscriptions. *Adam and Eve*, by Luther T. Townsend, D. D., (1904). Whyte's *Bible Characters*, "Adam" and "Eve." Dr. Horton's *Women of the Old Testament*, "Eve." Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible*, "Adam." Clement's *Heroines of the Bible in Art*, "Eve." Jacob's *Side Lights on Bible Texts* (Gen. 2: 9, 17). "Tree of Knowledge and Tree of Life." Charles Kingsley's *Gospel in the Pentateuch*, "The Likeness of God."

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Sidney Lanier's *Poems*, "Psalm of the West." Goethe's *Poems*, "Tame Xenia," a quatrain. Amory H. Bradford's *The Ascent of the Soul*. The story of Prometheus, see Eschylus' "*Prometheus Bound*."

In our last lesson we studied the making of the world and its inhabitants, gradually growing from lower to higher, till we came to the highest animals on the sixth day. It required all this previous preparation of earth and sky, of vegetable and animal life, before the world was prepared for the highest and noblest of earthly created creatures.

I. The Second Story of Creation.—Gen. 2: 4-7. In the first story of creation we have the general statement of the work of God on the sixth day, that God made man. But in a second story we have a detailed account of his creation.

That there are two distinct stories is shown (1) by the formula or title, "These are the generations," (the genealogy, the history of the beginning, and the historical progress of this beginning), whether it belongs to what goes before, or what follows. (2) The most noticeable distinguishing feature is the use of "Jehovah" in connection with God, to show that the Creator of the world and the God of Israel revealed to Moses (Ex. 6: 2) were the

same. In the authorized and the revised versions Jehovah is translated LORD, in small capitals. (3) The ground covered is different in extent. (4) The first story is systematic, in the second all is grouped around the creation of man. (5) It naturally follows that many of the details are different. In the Babylonian accounts there are hints of the same diversity of accounts.

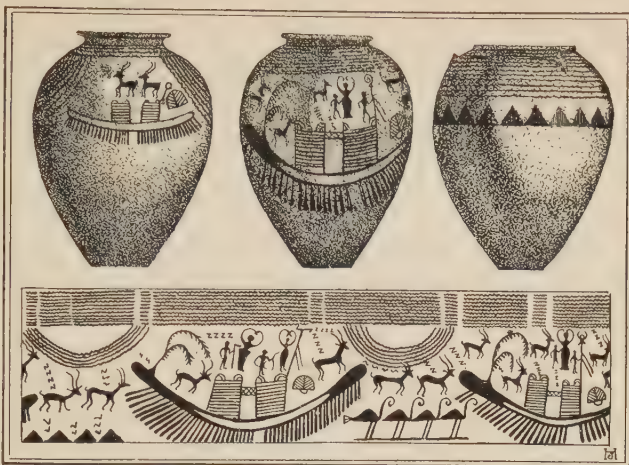
ARE THE ACCOUNTS CONTRADICTORY? They are not, because on

the very face of them they are not parallel accounts covering the same ground. This account is an enlargement of the portion of the first history which is connected with the creation of man, just as is frequently done in our histories, and illustrated by many of our maps where in some corner is placed an enlarged map of some special portion. To measure these by the same scale of miles would make contradictions where there are none. Harmonizing is impossible because there is nothing to harmonize.

The only way to make the two accounts contradictory is either to assume, contrary to the face-evidence, that the two cover exactly the same ground; or to read into the second story a good many things which are not there. For instance, the critic says, that "In the second story the order of creation is reversed. . . . In the first story man and woman are created together; in the second, the order of creation is man, vegetation, animals, woman." But the second story does not give any order of creation, but states facts in ordinary language without telling the order, nor does the first story say he created man and woman together. The second story simply tells how he created them male and female. If I were to say that I liked Shakespeare and Tennyson and Homer and Whittier, I in no wise controvert my knowledge of their chronological order. If I were giving an account of a young man's education for his profession, and give a list of his college studies for his first year, his second year, his third and fourth year in order, and later have reason to say that he studied organic chemistry and German and corporation law, to better fit him for his work, — it would be only by misrepresentation that in this latter case I intended to give the same order as in the first, that any conflict could be found between the two statements. There was no conflict. It is bad to "force a harmony." It is equally unscientific to force a discord.

THE PICTURE IN THE SECOND STORY is located in the land of that region where man began to live, just before the time of man's creation, when that land was without vegetation for want of rain. Then came a mist and rain, and the land soon was clothed with plant life, ready for the food of man.

Authorities agree that man appears at the close of some one of the glacial periods. The great ice age, with ice sometimes a mile thick, with our present Arctic conditions, must have swept away all life from the portions over which it extended. This story of creation gives a simple and natural account of the restoration of the plants and animals to this region, and the creation of man. I have just consulted a prominent geologist and biologist, and without telling my reasons for the questions, lest he be thought to be biased in his answers, asked him what would be the condition of things when the glaciers gradually melted away. His reply was that, of course, the glacier destroyed all vegetable and animal life. During its cold there could be no rain, but only snow. As it melted, the region would be covered



From Breasted's "History of Egypt," Charles Scribner's Sons.
Predynastic Pottery from Egypt, the oldest known.
With Painted Designs of Boats, Animals, Men, and Women.

26. And God said, ¹ Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and ² let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27. ^{So} And God created man in his ^{own} own image, ³ in the image of God created he him; ⁴ male and female created he them.

¹ Gen. 5: 1; 9: 6.

² Gen. 9: 2.

³ 1 Cor. 11: 7.

⁴ Gen. 5: 2; Matt. 19: 4.

with mist and fog, as now with the Greenland glaciers, followed by its condensation into rain and streams of water, when plant life would re-appear, the bare sandy waste would be clothed with vegetation, and animals soon follow. It would be difficult to find a more exact description of these facts, than that given in Gen. 2: 4-6, just before the creation of man.

II. The Creation of Man.—Gen. 1: 26, 27; 2: 7. On the second half of the sixth day, the last and greatest act of creation. 26. **And God said, Let us make man.** The *us* may be the plural of dignity such as rulers use in their public proclamations, implying some connection with the State; but in addition probably Dillmann's explanation is correct,—“To the Hebrew who names God in the plural, *Elohim*, God is the living personal combination of a fulness of energies and powers. . . . ‘We’ seems to be here employed because the matter now in hand is the communicating to men the fulness of the divine powers.” Professor Mitchell suggests that it refers to other intelligences (angels) existing before the creation of man and recognized as interested spectators, as the French use *assister*. So Delitzsch, “We have to admit that God the Father is comprising himself either with the Son and the Spirit, or with celestial spirits.” *Man*, “in the collective sense.” Mitchell; the beginning of the human race, the first man. **In our image, after our likeness.** “*Image and likeness*, two words of nearly the same import, are used to express the thought more fully and strongly than could be done by any single term.”—*Prof. Thomas F. Conant*. “This likeness cannot refer to physical likeness, because God is a spirit, and no physical likeness can exist of God. The references to God in this chapter prove that there was in the mind of the writer no low view of God as having a human form. Man's soul is like God, a spiritual personality with intellect, memory, reason, self-determining will, conscience, emotions, moral and religious faculties, immortality.”

It is because of this likeness that man can know God, and God can make Himself known to man.

THE DUAL NATURE OF MAN is shown in the second narrative, which relates in fuller detail the creation of man. “From the beginning he bears in himself the twofoldness of nature upon which the twofold possibility of his development rests.”—*Dillmann*.

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Gen. 2: 7).

1. *God formed his body of the dust of the ground.* NOTE that it does not say *how* God formed man out of the dust, it simply states the fact. When wise men say “that clay is taken and moulded into the form of a man,” “a clay figure,” like that in the Greek story of Prometheus, who out of clay forms the human body, and gives life to it by means of a spark stolen from the gods, or their story of life given to Pygmalion's ivory statue,—they simply read into the narrative what is not there, as I used to when a boy. The bodies of men as well as of animals are to this day formed out of the dust as really as was the body of the first man; for they “consist of the very same elements as the soil which forms the crust of the earth.” All that we eat is made of the dust of the earth, and the same elements as the dust, derived from the air.

2. *His living soul was created in man by God.* 27. **So God created man.** He formed his body, but he *created* his spirit, made in the image of God; he put into man something that was not in the world before.

(Gen. 2: 7) **Breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.** This means more than the inbreathing of animal life. “Seeing that our author speaks of an inbreathing by God only in the case of man, and not in the case of animals, it would seem that in it is meant to consist the specific preeminence of man over the animals, that which in vs. 26, 27 is called the image of God; *i. e.*, that by this inbreathing, affecting man personally, is meant the communication, not merely of the physical, but, at the same time, of the mental vitality of man, the communication of the spirit.”—*Dillmann*.

Contrast Wordsworth's

"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that riseth with us, our life's star,
Hath elsewhere had its setting,
And cometh from afar."

So contrast an old poem;

"Then God smites his hands together
And strikes out a soul as a spark
Into the organized glory of things
From the deeps of the dark."

NOTE (1) that there is nothing in this account contrary to the theory of evolution with God in it, so far as that theory has been worked out. All through the progress of development there are sudden unaccountable leaps and bounds, but none so great as that between the highest apes and the lowest man, physically. Says Professor Rice, "The interval between the Monkey and Man is one of the greatest. The capacity of the brain in the lowest of men is 68 cubic inches, while that in the highest Man Ape is but 34 (only one half as large). . . . The connecting link . . . has not been found although earnestly looked for. No specimen of the stone age that has yet been discovered is inferior to the lowest of existing men."

"The present teaching of geology very strongly confirms the belief that Man was not of Nature's making."—*Dana's Text Book on Geology*. Revised and enlarged by Prof. W. North Rice.

Prof. Thomas Dwight of the Harvard Medical School, in a late address (1906) in Boston, is reported to have said: "Between the physical structure of the ape and that of man, there is a difference in degree, but not in kind. The main difference is that man has a soul, 'an immortal soul,'" he continued, "differing absolutely not only in degree but in kind from what may be called the vital principle which is existing in the lower animals, and that is what makes man not only a little higher than the apes, but a little lower than the angels." He did not think it impossible that plants may develop into animals, although he did not think it likely; "but when it is said that man had an ape for his grandfather, we are talking nonsense if we are talking by the principles of sane reason."

It was not proved, he added, that man came from the lower animals, and, as a scientific secret, he said the real leaders in science are at a pause.

So Le Conte, "The earliest known man, the river-drift man, though in a low state of civilization, was as thoroughly human as any of us."

NOTE (2). Two opposite errors are frequently held in regard to the Bible account of the first man. One, that he was a typical savage, a cave-dweller, lower than the inhabitants of darkest Africa, "entertaining the most gross and anthropomorphic conceptions of deity," and that from this lowest savage, the higher races were gradually developed without external revelation into the higher civilized races of men. The present savages seem to be a degeneration, and none of them seem to rise without external influences from higher races.

The other opinion, without foundation in the Biblical story, is that the first man "was the most splendid specimen of the race the world ever saw, fair as an angel, holy as a seraph"; that "an Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens but the rudiments of paradise." He simply was perfect as a man, complete with all the possibilities of manhood. He was innocent but inexperienced, entirely untrained and uneducated. He was like a child in a good home, to be trained and educated. He was not cultured and did not possess the arts and outward appliances of civilization. The skins for clothing and stone implements do not prove that the first man was a savage at heart. Plato and Socrates and Paul are as great in the humblest hut and meanest attire as they would have been living like Solomon in all his glory.

We are learning more and more almost every year of the long-ago civilizations of Egypt and Babylonia, and the earliest glimpses we have of them show a high development such as would be natural to man if created and taught as described in the early chapter of Genesis.

THE CREATION OF WOMAN.—Male and female created he them, both alike are made in the image of God, both alike are his children. How he made them is told in the second story. (Gen. 2: 18, 21-24.) It was **not good that man should be alone**. None of the animal creation, not even the highest ape, was near enough to him to be his companion, and the mother of the new human race. No man could develop into his best while alone. Either it would be necessary to create a woman in the same way as Adam was created, or in some other and better way to supply the needed companion.

While Adam was in a deep sleep, the Lord God took one of his ribs, and from it made, or rather built up, a woman, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh.

There are ancient legends that remind us of the Genesis narrative. The religion of Zoroaster pictures "the double form of a man and woman joined together at the back, whom Ahuramazda separated, and placed within them an intelligent soul." In the Rig-Veda

(900 to 1400 B. C.) is a similar story of the first human pair formed by separating a double being into two personalities. Plato in his *Symposium* relates a similar story, adding that "the gods made them male and female, who desire to come together in order to return to their primitive unity, whence the attraction of love."

The number of these legends points backward to some early fact from which these stories originated.

IS THE STORY OF THE CREATION OF MAN AND WOMAN A TRUE HISTORY, OR A PARABOLIC REPRESENTATION OF GREAT FACTS? — (1) The *teachings* of this story were almost necessary to the training of early man. There is no miracle in the Bible half so hard to believe as that God should leave his children in the childhood of their race without any knowledge of their divine origin, and of mutual relationships, and consequent duties and privileges. "*Credat Judæus, non Ego.*" (2) But whether he made them known by some vision, or symbolic representation, or by direct communication, is in no wise essential. The teaching was and is the same. So that if any one of our scholars feels that he cannot accept them as literal, it is not worth while to argue the question. (3) At the same time no one has ever suggested any more natural, more noble, more sensible, more beautiful origin of man and woman than is here described.

III. **Lessons for To-day.** — 1. The glory of man is that he is made in the image of God. Herein is hope, joy, life, and immortality. This fact makes life worth living.

"Trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home."

2. It is from this revealed fact of our origin that we are able to know what we need to know about God our Father. "Only a personal God could create a person." Summing up the highest and best that is in man, we know that God has will, and conscience, and affections, and is as really a person as we are persons. He is not merely, "a bright essence increate," "a power that makes for righteousness," but a personality.

"By all that God requires of me
I know what God himself must be."

3. God puts great honor upon man, chiefly upon his soul. Man is "a worm of the dust," only by poetic contrast with the greatness and goodness possible to him, and the infinite perfections of God. God honors man by what he has done to train him, and to save him, even to the sending his Son Jesus Christ.

4. We should always remember that we are children of God, "partakers of the divine nature." "I am the child of a king." How this truth should inspire us, encourage us to "walk worthy of the vocation to which we are called." Hence, we should take the utmost care not to mar or defile that glorious likeness by which we can know God, can understand his moral nature and his love, and be fitted to dwell forever in his home.

5. Man erect is the highest physical form of animals. "His increasing erectness, a known result of culture, indicates the course which *upward* progress must make. Further improvement can give physically only larger capacity to the brain, and greater beauty of form to the whole structure, and make these qualities more general." — *Rice-Dana*. It is man's business to take the best care possible of his body, as "the temple of the Holy Spirit," as the divine soul's instrument for the service of God and man; and to put away every sin which weakens or destroys the body.

"Man looks aloft, and with erected eyes
Beholds his own hereditary skies,"
— *Dryden's Ovid*.

"Formed in the likeness of the all-ordering gods;
And, while all other creatures sought the ground
With downward aspect grovelling, gave to man
His port sublime, and bade him scan, erect,
The heavens, and front with upward gaze the stars.
And thus earth's substance, rude and shapeless erst,
Transmuted took the novel form of Man."
— *Ovid, Metamorphoses*.

6. "The portrait of Adam is that of a child. It has the physical height of a man, but its mental attitude is that of a child. It is a figure representative of all childhood — always, everywhere." — *Matheson*. The whole history of man is the development, under the guidance of God, of this child-man, till the Garden of Eden becomes the City of God, and

28. And God blessed them; and God said unto them, ¹ Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that ^a moveth upon the earth.

¹ Gen. 9: 1, 7.^a Hebrew, *creeper*.

the individual becomes a perfect man in Christ Jesus. This is "the ascent of man." The result is inconceivably great and good. The golden age of the Bible is not in the past, but in the future, the goal of man. This origin of man is full of Hope. It is a rainbow of promise in his sky. There is no kingdom he may not gain, no ideal beyond his possibilities.

7. The same God who breathed life into the dust-made body, still breathes into the soul, defiled by sin, dead in sin, the new life of righteousness and heaven by his Holy Spirit.

8. "Woman was taken out of man: not out of his head to top him, nor out of his feet to be trampled under foot, but out of his side to be equal to him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved." — *Matthew Henry*. This method of creation expresses the utmost possible unity of husband and wife: unity of life, of soul, of feeling, of home. "They two shall be one flesh." The best can come to any family only when this unity is a fact, and to any nation when this realization is universal. This is one of the most perfect tests of progress.

9. There is a strong lesson in Tennyson's verses, entitled "By an Evolutionist," which begin:

"The Lord let the house of a brute to the soul of a man,
And the man said, 'Am I your debtor?'
And the Lord, — 'Not yet, but make it as clean as you can,
And then I will let you a better.'"

And which declare at the close:

"If my body come from brutes, tho' somewhat finer than their own,
I am heir, and this my kingdom. Shall the royal voice be mute?
No, but if the rebel subject seek to drag me from the throne,
Hold the scepter, Human Soul, and rule thy Province of the brute."

IV. The Dominion of Man. — Vs. 28—31. 28. **And God blessed them**, by giving them children, and dominion, and noble work, and food. It would be a blessing, a happiness, to live. The joy of God himself was bestowed upon his children. **Be fruitful.** As God delighted in his work of creation so that "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38: 7), so he would have his children blessed in filling the earth with people. If it was good for them, it was good to have the whole world filled full of happy and holy beings enjoying the good things he has made. It was also a blessing to them, for children are a great blessing in a family. Their presence cultivates every virtue and adds to every true joy. Family life is best also for the children. **And have dominion over the fish . . . and . . . every living thing.** These are by nature subordinate to man; and by his higher nature man would have the power to benefit the lower animals, supply them with food and care, and give them a larger usefulness and a higher and happier life than they could have without man. This is true of all well-cared-for domestic animals to-day. "Man's relation to the beasts is that of Providence," says George Adam Smith. Every true ruler must rule for the good of the governed. The evolution of animals is greatly hastened by the skill of man. Charles Darwin, in his *Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication*, shows that brutes trust man till they learn to know him from his bad conduct, and that the more civilized peoples can raise the brute creation to a higher condition than savages have ever done. A dog is a converted wolf; the cat a civilized lion or tiger. "In all previous ages there ruled brute force and ferocity. In the era of Man alone appears Reason as ruler. Through man's agency there is now going on in organic forms a change as sweeping as any which has ever taken place. It is going on now, and will not be complete until civilized man occupies the whole earth." — *Le Conte*. **And subdue it.** "Bring it under cultivation, master all its forces, possess themselves of its resources, subject it and all that it contains to their use. This, man is gradually learning to do in the advancement of knowledge and the progress of science and the arts." — *Professor Green*.

Marvelous as has been man's control over the forces of nature, beyond seer's vision or poet's imagination, yet man has even now attained to but a small portion of the treasures

29. And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb ^{a bearing yielding} seed, which ^{is} upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which ^{is} the fruit of a tree yielding seed; ¹ to you it shall be for meat;

30. ^{And} ^{and} to ² every beast of the earth, and to every ³ fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein ^{there is} ^b life, *I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.*

31. And ⁴ God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, ^{it was} ^{it was} very good. And ^{the} ^{there was} evening and ^{the} ^{there was} morning, ^{were} the sixth day.

1. ^{Thus} ^{And} the ^{heavens} ^{And} the earth were finished, and ⁶ all the host of them.

2. ⁶ And on the seventh day God ^{ended} ^{finished} his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

3. And God ⁷ blessed the seventh day, and ^{sanctified} ^{hallowed} it: because that in it he ^{had} rested from all his work which God ^{had} ^c created and made.

¹ Gen. 9: 3; Acts 14: 17.

² Psa. 145: 15, 16; 147: 9.

³ Job 38: 41.

⁴ Psa. 104: 24.

⁵ Psa. 33: 6.

⁶ Ex. 20: 11.

⁷ Neh. 9: 14.

a Hebrew, *seeding seed.*

b Hebrew, *a living soul.*

c Hebrew, *created to make.*

of his kingdom, a few grains from the harvest, a few drops from the measureless ocean. But as he regains the image of God, he will gain his dominion over all nature. For it is written on the history of the world that only so fast and far as man becomes filled with the spirit of Christianity does he hold dominion over animals, or make the earth his servant. And it is well that it is so, for, if a savage race could wield the powers of civilization, it would be as dangerous as for children to play with firearms, or dynamite, or electrical machinery.

“What an education for the race has been this labor of *subduing the earth*! How it has developed reflection, stimulated invention, and quickened the powers of combination, which would otherwise have lain dormant! . . . Hence arises the right of property, the origin and bond of civil society; and thus all the blessings of society and of civilization and government are due to the divinely implanted impulse, ‘Fill the earth, and subdue it.’”

This command, the impulse to dominion, and to subduing the earth, was even more essential to the earliest man than it is to-day.

31. Thus closed the sixth day, and **God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.**

V. **The Seventh Day.**—Gen. 2: 1–3. The condition and means by which man can best realize his mission and character as the child of God. This story belongs to the first chapter, and the division into chapters should so have included it.

2. **And on the seventh day God ended** (finished, completed) **his work** of creation. The world was done, as far as creative energy was concerned. The Rice-Dana geology says, “Against the introduction of new species in coming time science has little to urge. . . . Science has made known that the highest species next to Man, that is, the brute Mammals, have already passed their maximum; hence, the rest of time remains for the culmination of the only higher type, that of Man. And, as this type includes now but one species, we have reason for expecting no new species in the future. . . . A different species of Man higher than existing Man is not a possibility.” (See Drummond’s *Ascent of Man*.) **His work.** “When the name *work* is given to God’s six days’ creation human work is ennobled to the highest conceivable degree, as being the copy of this model.”—*Delitzsch*. **He rested on the seventh day.** He rested as creator. From that time till to-day God has been doing in his large way what he would have his children do, in their small sphere, on the Sabbath. He has been guiding and developing, teaching, training, and caring for his creation both material and spiritual. While the material has not been neglected, but has gained in almost equal upward progress with the spiritual, the great work of God has been, and is, for man, the moral, intellectual, and religious progress of man, toward the completed kingdom of God, the highest ideal for the individual and the race.

NOTE that as a matter of fact the seventh day is a long period, an era, like the other days, only here there is no “evening and morning,” no time when there was no Sabbath, but from the beginning it was a day, light, blessing, duty, delight, God’s highest and best work for man, growing brighter, but never ending, the fitting sequel to the other six days, like Jacob’s ladder resting on the earth but reaching to heaven and God.

3. And God blessed the seventh day. Made it a blessing to man, one of the greatest blessings he ever bestowed, "endowed it with a treasure of grace flowing forth from the rest of the Creator." — *Delitzsch*. "This institution, though, like other institutions, capable of abuse, has, nevertheless . . . operated on the whole with wonderful efficiency in maintaining the life of a pure and spiritual religion." — *Professor Driver*, in *Hastings' Bible Dict.* **And sanctified it.** "Hallowed" it. Set it apart for sacred uses. "Made it a holy day, taken out from among the common days, and devoted to God, having a special relation to a holy God." — *Dillmann*.

NOTE (1) that the reason here given for the Sabbath is repeated in the Fourth Commandment to enforce and illustrate the duty of Sabbath keeping.

NOTE (2) that however this account may have been re-edited and re-enforced in later days when its blessings and duties had been neglected, yet it belongs where it now is placed, at the very beginning of the human race. It is impossible that God should have waited thousands of years before he gave to his children, and enforced by his authority, a blessing and a duty so essential to man's development and religious life. It could not have been a late revelation derived from some Babylonian legend. Nor would it have been possible to induce the Jews at some late period to accept and obey a new Sabbath law. Nothing even to-day but the power of divine authority behind the institution can preserve the Sabbath as a power and a blessing.

NOTE (3) the fact that "days of restriction," periods of rest from occupations are found among many early peoples, and that "the origin of such restrictions," according to Professor Driver, in *Hastings' Bible Dict.*, "is lost in antiquity," points unmistakably to some common origin early in the history, like that described in Genesis.

This is confirmed by the fact that the week-division of time is not a natural one like days and months, but is artificial.

NOTE (4) Some such institution was essential to the moral and religious development of man, the means of cultivating his higher nature, and, hence, to the best progress of his civilization — physical and mental.

NOTE (5) The two great essential foundations of man's progress and true prosperity were ordained at the very beginning, — the *family* and the *Sabbath*. These two primeval institutions, kept sacred and wisely used, are the remedy for most of our social and moral evils.

NOTE (6) The Sabbath is the opportunity for caring for the spiritual nature, the highest and noblest part of man. This is its wisest and best use. It is as necessary for the soul as food is for the body. We should keep it in the manner shown in God's own example. Rest from daily toil and labor, but using the necessary labor for preserving our bodies in a fit state for spiritual improvement, and in spiritual activity for ourselves and others, through which we both learn, and grow in character.

LESSON III. — January 20.

MAN'S SIN AND GOD'S PROMISE. — Genesis 3: 1-6, 13-15.

STUDY the Chapter. COMMIT v. 15.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

1 COR. 15: 22.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Contrast the temptation of Adam and Eve, the first of the human race, with that of Christ the beginning of the new Dispensation, — failure and victory.

Find Examples in the Bible of persons tempted, (1) of those who failed, as Adam, Balaam, Jeroboam, Judas, Ananias, and

Sapphira; (2) of those who overcame, as Abraham, Moses, Joshua, Peter, Paul.

Temptation as a Test or Trial. — Gen. 22; Deut. 8: 2; Dan. 12: 10; Zech. 13: 9; Heb. 2: 16-18; 4: 14-16; 12: 11; Jas. 1: 2, 3; 1 Pet. 1: 7.

The Means of Victory over Temptation. — Prov. 1: 10; Matt. 6: 13; 26: 41;

Rom. 12: 21; 1 Cor. 10: 13; Gal. 5: 16; Eph. 6: 16; 1 Thes. 3: 3; Jas. 4: 7; 1 Pet. 5: 8, 9; 2 Pet. 2: 9; Rev. 3: 10; 12: 11.

Christ's Help to the Tempted.—
Luke 22: 31, 32; John 17: 15; Heb. 2: 18; 4: 15.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

This story will have a peculiar interest and fascination for children, as well as helpful teaching; for the portrait of Adam is that of child-life. "Every step in this garden story is your story. The child Adam is your looking-glass—the mirror of your yesterday. Come and look into the glass. You will read there your own biography."—*Matheson.*

Then turning from the child-man who yielded to temptation, and the vision of the long line of evils such yielding has brought, we show them the vision of Christ, who was tempted like as we are, but gained the victory, and showed us the way and gives us the help by which we, too, may gain the victory. Let the blessings his victory brought, to the world cheer us on to follow in his glorious steps.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING MORAL QUESTIONS.

Not in theory but in actual life. Have each scholar place before himself some one or more of the wrong things he is tempted to do at home, in the Sunday school, or day school, and decide now and here that he will overcome them in God's strength.

PLAN OF THE LESSON. SUBJECT: The Tragedy of Sin.

THE SOURCES OF THE GARDEN STORY.

Under six heads.

I. THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

Location.

Relation to city of God.

II. MAN IN HIS EDEN HOME.

Innocence.

Companionship.

The tree of life.

Tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Work.

III. THE TEMPTER (v. 1).

IV. THE TEMPTATION (vs. 1-5).

The first great moral battle.

Points of contact with modern life.

V. THE FALL (vs. 6, 7).

The battle lost.

The tragedy of sin.

Contrast with Christ's victory.

VI. THE CONSEQUENCES (vs. 7-23).

Moral. Physical.

To the serpent.

To the woman.

To man.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Yield not to temptation."

"Christian, dost thou see them?"

"For all the saints who from their labors rest."

LEARN BY HEART.

Heb. 4: 15; Eph. 6: 10, 11; Jas. 1: 12.

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The Garden of Eden.

The character of the first man.

Why was it necessary that man should be tested by temptation?

Why was the forbidden tree called the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil"?

Is this story a picture of every human life?

Contrast the temptation of Adam with that of Jesus. The sources of hope.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Prof. James Orr's *God's Image in Man* (1905). Lenormant's *Beginnings of History*. Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible*. F. W. Robertson's *Notes on Genesis*, Lecture 4. *Eden Lost and Won*, by Sir J. W. Dawson. Professor Swing's sermon on "Paradise Lost," in his *Truths for To-day*. Jacox's *Side Lights on Scripture Texts*, "The Tree of Knowledge," etc. Ryle's *Early Narratives of Genesis*. W. F. Warren's *Paradise Found*. Charles Kingsley's *Gospel of the Pentateuch*. Dr. Alexander McKenzie's *The Divine Force in the Life of the World*, "The Course of Man in the Oldest Literature." Peloubet's *Suggestive Illustrations on Matthew*, "The Temptation," pp. 44-58. Books on the Temptation of Christ.

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Mrs. Browning's *A Drama of Exile*. Owen Meredith's *Legends of Exile*. Arthur Clough's *Fragments of the Mystery of the Fall*. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, especially books IV., V., IX., X. Hawthorne's story of Pandora's box, in his *Wonder Book*. Story of Prometheus in Eschylus' "Prometheus Bound," told also in Larned's *Old Tales retold from Grecian Mythology*. The Greek story of Circe in Homer's "Odyssey," best told for children in Hawthorne's exquisite *Tanglewood Tales*. The Greek story of the Sirens told by Homer. Trench's *Poems*, "Orpheus and the Sirens," illustrates the two ways of over-

coming their fascination. The tract, "Parley the Porter" (American Tract Society). Plato's *Republic*, the story of Gyges ring. An illustration of forbidden fruit in Lamb's *Essays of Elia*, "The Last Peach." In George Eliot's *Romola*, Tito

gradually deteriorates by yielding to temptation. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, "The Battle with Apollyon." Farrar's *Life of Christ in Art*, pp. 310-312. Rogers' *Greyson Letters*, "The Madman and the Devil." Hesiod's *Works and Days*.

THE SOURCES OF THE GARDEN STORY.

1. This narrative is regarded by the critics as a continuation of the Jehovistic story begun at Gen. 2: 4, and by the same writer, or incorporated in his writings.

2. "The idea of the Edenic happiness of the first human beings constitute one of the universal traditions." — *Lenormant*. The Golden Age was in the Past, and all other ages were degenerate. "Coloured by local surroundings, national history, and heathenism, the story of a happy past, when 'men, as yet without any evil passions, passed their lives without reproach and crimes, and therefore without punishments and restraints,' has everywhere been cherished by mankind. . . . They date, in fact, from before the separation of mankind into different races, all countries evidently drawing them from a common source." — *Geikie*. There is no other sufficient explanation of their origin, including, as they do, Edenic blessedness, innocence, the serpent, the tree, and degeneracy. "With equal unanimity the world's traditions record a fall from this first state. The occasion of the change is in every case the same. The details of the change are in many cases the same. The state after the change is always the same, — the condition of pain, labor, sorrow, suffering, sickness, death." — *President W. R. Harper*.

3. "While in a true sense prehistoric, we may well call this event, or combination of events — whichever it was — the *beginning of history*, that to which all history points back; but also the *foundation of history*, that upon which all history rests. There is a sense, too, in which it might be said to be the *shaper of history*. . . . This story, whether false or true, whether a fancy of the brain or a real substantial fact, is the key-note to the understanding of the world's religions." — *President Harper*.

4. The most probable, the most natural source is that the sane, simple, pure, unadorned story given in Genesis is the historic fact back of all the stories in all the nations. There is no other way to account for them. This does not dispute the claim that the narrative was put in its present form 800 to 900 B. C., for the date of a writing does not decide the date of the documents incorporated in it. We have written documents in the Hammurabi code, earlier than Abraham; and it is natural that through the line of the true worshippers of God the true account should be preserved. It was needed with its helpful teachings from the very beginning. It is not at all probable that in a late period of Israel a heathen Babylonian story could be modified, hallowed, purified by any prophet and received by the people as the true teaching of God.

5. Whatever view we take of this chapter, it is a true picture of human life on earth so marvelously accurate, so divinely religious, and true to human nature and to divine, so (in the statement by President Harper in the *Biblical World*) pure, simple, uplifting, stimulating, hopeful of the future, abounding in religious feeling and spirit, so rich in religious teaching, "without the shadow of a mythical idea," that it seems impossible for any early man to have invented it, and, therefore, it must be a true statement of the facts of early history. No account can be imagined so beautiful, so natural, so honorable to man and God as the simple, straightforward, literal story as given in the Bible. The way of testing man is simple and natural. "Let us recall to mind," says Professor Swing in *Truths for To-day*, "what a large part of this story must be true, even if it made no pretense to be an inspired narrative. It is not, certainly, a myth that there is a human race, and there must have been a first pair, and this pair must have had a home and a Creator at hand; and must have made their first move in virtue or sin; and from what sin we now see in the world, that they early left the paradise of virtue, is the verdict of history." It is a fact that sin is in the world. It is a fact that God cannot be the author of sin. It is a fact that sin came from a will, a free act in revolt against God's will. It is a fact that that man must early have had some test.

6. But the truth of the story does not determine the *method* of its revelation. It is perfectly in harmony to believe that the truth is expressed by emblem, by symbol, or picture, or parable, or figure of speech, as truly as by words. The Bible abounds in such methods of expressing the truth. Thus Dr. Maclaren says: "All thoughtful readers recognize

symbolical elements in the narrative of the fall. The extent of these is a matter on which opinions are divided and certainly unattainable. But the main thing is to hold fast by the historical fact of a fall, and to see in the story a reliable account of the way in which sin came into humanity."

I. The Garden of Eden. — The Garden of Eden was but a small portion of the region called Eden. The Garden or Paradise is a place fenced round; hence a park, a pleasure-ground with trees, streams, flowers, and fruits. It lay eastward in the district of Eden. It was well watered with flowing streams. In it was "every tree that was pleasant to the sight, and good for food," but the greatest charm of the Garden was the Tree of Life, probably not a single tree but a species of tree, and another most wonderful and attractive tree, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. "Immortal life," says Dillmann, "is a divine possession, and to know good and evil (if we know them in the divine way) is likewise a truly divine prerogative (Gen. 3: 22). Trees which possess such advantages must themselves be of divine kind. . . . It is a wonderful garden, a true Garden of God." We may dwell with delight on Milton's pictures of unfallen man. What a wide range to their life and enjoyment in the infinite variety and exquisite beauty and flavor of the fruits, the love-

liness of nature, the blessedness of communion with God.

NOTE that this garden is represented as ministering to all parts of man's nature. There is not only delicious food for the body, but beauty to culture the mind, and means for training the moral nature.

ITS RELATION TO THE CITY OF GOD IN REVELATION. There we find the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, and on either bank the tree of life bearing twelve manner of fruits, and its leaves for the healing of the nations. The work of God through the centuries has been to change the garden of innocence to the city of perfection, with the waters and trees of life the same, but perfected.



From Breasted's "History of Egypt," Charles Scribner's Sons.

Magnificent Carved Ceremonial Palette of Slate. First Dynasty.
In the Temple of Hieraconpolis, Egypt.

ITS RELATION TO OUR LIFE. The symbols of Eden, perfected for redeemed man, are a type of what God means our lives to be here, of the possibilities now in this present time, in beauty, richness, earthly fruits, spiritual blessings, the tree of life, heavenly discipline, freedom from sin, communion with God, loving work, and life everlasting. Only sin prevents this ideal from becoming real; and as fast as sin is removed can and will this earth's possibilities be ours.

THE LOCATION OF EDEN IS UNKNOWN. Beyond the fact that it includes, at least, portions of the Euphrates and the Tigris, we have no definite knowledge, nor do we know the extent of the district or province of Eden in which the Garden was situated. The tendency is to locate early man in the southern part of this district near the Persian Gulf. Haeckel regards it as submerged under the Indian Ocean.

II. Man in His Eden Home. — Man was placed in the most favorable circumstances for his development and growth; in a beautiful garden, with all the influences of noble nature around him; in natural communion with God, with plenty of work in taking care of his home farm, in gaining and exercising dominion over it, with a perfect family life; — all of which were educational forces, so that Eden was the great school of man.

COMPARE the Greek garden of the Hesperides in the splendor of the western sun, guarded by the four sisters Aëglé, *Brightness*; Erytheia, *Blushing*; Hestia, the *Spirit of the Hearth*; Arethusa, *Ministering*; — the guardian angels of every home.

I. MAN WAS INNOCENT, but not a savage, except in outward surroundings and ap-

pliances. Thoreau living near to nature by Walden Pond was no savage. This man was a child, with all the possibilities of growth in character and civilization.

"A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what is heaven for?"

2. COMPANIONSHIP. Victor Hugo's "awful picture of a man in the ocean with the vast and silent heavens above, the desolate waves around, the birds like dwellers in another world circling in the evening light, and the poor fellow trying to swim he knows not where," is not an inapt picture of what the first man would be, alone and without direct help from God. One person alone would almost certainly degenerate, or, at the best, develop very slowly.

Hence the family was formed for mutual companionship and help. The family rightly used is the greatest educational institution in the world. More than this, Adam was taught language just as children are, by some one without speaking to him, as God spoke; and by his practice of language by naming things (Gen. 2: 19).

3. THE TREE OF LIFE, like that in the City of God, was doubtless medicinal for such accidents as might happen, and to prevent the decay and death of the body, not by a single eating of its fruits, but by continual use of its fruits.

"From it flowed, as from a well, a trickling stream of balm;
Life and long health that gracious ointment gave, and deadly wounds could heal."

— Spenser.

"Man was, therefore, naturally mortal, though apparently with a capacity for immortality. . . . The mystical nature of the tree of life is fully recognized in the New Testament, by our Lord, when he says, 'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God. . . . Both these representations are intended to convey, in a striking and pictorial form, the promise of life everlasting.' — *Professor Dods*.

Thus there was from the very first a culture of the immortal nature of man, of his religious life, and of his relationship with God.

4. THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL was not "the tree of knowledge," but only of the *knowledge of good and evil*. It was not to prevent them from knowing good and evil. Its purpose was to teach them that knowledge in the divine way through knowing the good by possessing it, and evil only by contrast. Not "Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill."

It was not there to make them fall into sin, but to train them in virtue by resisting temptation. It was necessary that there should be something forbidden that seemed desirable. There was no other way of opening the door to man's highest possibilities, his fullest development, his purest holiness, his greatest happiness, his largest usefulness. All who would become strong and useful must gain their power largely through victory over temptation. It is thus that the soul "builds itself larger mansions." It is a chief factor in education. Men cultivate courage through things that test courage. They grow in faith through the things that try their faith. They learn business by taking the risks of business. People without trials and temptations are always failures.

Whether this was a real or a symbolic tree is of little account, though it is impossible to conceive of a more simple and natural test of obedience than such a forbidden tree, when we remember that Adam was but a child in development. It is like the forbidden objects by which we train children. There may have been something in its fruit which would have been injurious. "The prohibition of this tree was to cultivate moral growth, for a man grows morally *only when he is in the presence of a forbidden thing* and restrains himself. There being a prohibition, he knows that there is a distinction between good and evil. He may choose either. This tree made him conscious of good and evil. The prohibition was a constant education of the law. The tree was named not for its fruit, but for the prohibition." — *Dods in Expositor's Bible*.

"Here is the announcement of a great principle, that human life is a *restricted* life, a life subjected to law; and he who confesses this subjection remains in Eden; and he who denies it is banished. As God made the ocean to roll between shores and said to it, 'Thus far and no farther,' so he placed the created soul between banks, and said, 'here only may thy bright waters flow.' The banks are not narrow. Human life need not be called a river, for it is vast as the ocean, deep and strong and sublime; but it has a shore all around, and along that shore the cherubim stand, and flaming swords gleam, to banish those who cross the boundary, marked all around by the finger of the Almighty." — *Professor Swing*.

1. Now ¹ the serpent was ² more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of ^{every} tree of the garden?

1 Rev. 12: 9.

2 Matt. 10: 16; 2 Cor. 11: 3.

The forbidden tree stands in every paradise of virtue and enjoyment. God has made a boundless provision for natural appetites; but there is always a limit, in going beyond which paradise is lost. The desire of progress, of acquiring property, of enjoying earth's blessings, is right; but the forbidden tree of gaining them by injuring others, by falsehood or fraud or selfishness, stands near. God wants us to enjoy, but in the heavenly way; and to gain any enjoyment of any kind of wrong is to eat of the forbidden tree and lose Paradise.

5. *Work*, the pleasant labor of caring for the garden was an essential part of the training of man. Nearly all the powers of civilization have come from the necessity of labor, not the grinding toil which ruins the body and dulls the soul, but that kind of labor which is allied to play, a joy and delight, as to-day brings the highest joy and delight. See Mrs. Osgood's poem *Laborare est Orare*.

III. The Tempter. — V. 1. Now the serpent was more subtle. Crafty, cunning, wise in gaining its ends, insidious. Therefore the best tool of any power that would use it for its crafty ends. That a real serpent is meant is evident from the curse laid upon it.

This speaking serpent is either (1) a tool used by "that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world" (Rev. 12: 9), because it was the most fitting instrument for his purpose. This is plain from the fact that the New Testament continually implies it. "The temptation of Jesus makes it quite certain that the serpent and Satan are in some way identical. John 8: 44; 2 Cor. 11: 3 (compare 14); Rom. 16: 20; Rev. 12: 9; 20: 2." — *Delitzsch*. Thus nearly all the older commentators. So Professor Dods says of the real serpent and its curse, "yet every reader feels that this is not the whole mystery of the fall of man: moral evil cannot be accounted for by referring it to a brute source." Read Milton's account how Satan, after reporting his success to the leaders in hell, slowly was changed into

"A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
Reluctant, but in vain. A greater power
Now ruled him, *punished in the shape he sinned*
According to his doom."

Professor Orr in his book on *God's Image in Man* says, "the serpent not only talks, but talks *evil*, which, if nothing more than an animal is intended, conflicts with the idea of a good creation by Jehovah."

Or (2) Professor Mitchell thinks that "the question is not what were the original form and capacity of this animal, but what the author of the story conceived it to be."

Or (3) the story is "merely a pictorial representation intended to convey some general impressions and ideas." — *Dods*.

Or (4) the serpent "is best interpreted as the personification of an evil principle outside of man." — *Professor Orr*. Spoke only as we say, "Let my actions speak," or "the blood of Abel crieth from the ground." The serpent by eating of the forbidden fruit and not suffering death thereby, suggested to Eve that she would not die either, if she ate of the fruit that seemed so delicious, and the evil suggestions of Satan mingled with her own thoughts. Compare Satan's temptations of Jesus, of which Dr. Boardman says, "My own impression is that Satan came to him in a guise hardly distinguishable from his own mental operations." "Temptation is all the more effective because so insidious, seeming to rise out of our own minds." "Bunyan, who knew so well the windings of the human heart, has admirably illustrated this when he represents his Pilgrim, while walking through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, as tempted by one of the wicked ones who got up behind him, and stepped up softly to him and whispered grievous blasphemies to him, which he verily thought had proceeded out of his own mind." This is one of the commonest ways in which Satan tempts us.

IV. The Temptation. The First Great Moral Battle. — Vs. 1-5. Said unto the woman. Because through the perfection of her nature she could be most easily attacked. Goethe's Wizards sing in chorus: —

"When towards the Devil's house we tread
Woman's a thousand steps ahead."

2. And the woman said unto the serpent, ^{We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:} ^{Of the fruit of the trees of the garden we} may eat:

3. ¹ But ^{is} of the fruit of the tree which ^{is} in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4. ² And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5. ^{For} God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then ³ your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as ^{gods,} knowing good and evil.

¹ Gen. 2: 17.

² V. 13; 2 Cor. 11: 3.

³ V. 7; Acts 26: 18.

The semi-chorus reply:

"But howso'er she hasten may,
Man in one leap clears the
way."

Yea, hath God said, **Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?** A very insinuating question. God is very good, but has he not laid some useless and trying restrictions upon you? Surely, there must be a mistake. If he loved you, could he shut you away from the delicious fruit on yonder tree? Are you to live in paradise and not be able to enjoy it?

NOTE how Satan persistently points to the few restrictions, and not to the wide range of privileges. Millions of trees and countless varieties of fruit were free to Eve, but Satan led her to dwell on the one forbidden thing. This is still a specimen of his tactics.

2. Eve replies that, **We may eat** of all, except one, laying emphasis on the liberality of God's gifts, and on the danger of disobeying. But, at the same time, she left out three emphatic expressions in her quotation of God's permission, *every tree, freely, and surely die*, which shows that the temptation was beginning to take effect. Whoever parleys with temptation is already on the verge of danger.

4. **And the serpent said . . . Ye shall not surely die.** This was the most deadly of lies, for it was a half-truth, by far the smallest half. There was no bodily poison in the tree, the death did not come at once like a lightning stroke, and the most deadly death was that of the spirit, not of the body. Satan is never so devilish as when he is disguised as an angel of light. This is the first recorded lie. Perhaps, as Milton represents, the serpent tried to prove his assertion by eating the fruit.

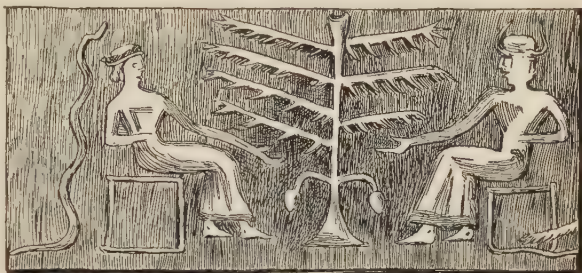
"How dies the serpent? He hath eaten and lives,
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented?"

5. The first assertion was that God was not truthful; next, the serpent adds that God is selfish and envious. This false picture of God's character made the temptation to disobedience the stronger. **God doth know that . . . then your eyes shall be opened**, as indeed they were, but not in the sense that Eve imagined.

In Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, the prophet of the silver veil tempts Zelica by visions of blessings which conceal his selfish soul, and by the silver veil which hides his hideous features.

Ye shall be as gods. Better as in R. V. "as God," Elohim. He meant her to understand that she would be like the glorious Being, her Creator, and the radiant seraphs who talked with her in paradise.

There are two ways of knowing good and evil. One is Satan's way, by knowing evil through experience, and good by contrast, a far-off dim vision of good. The other is the divine way of knowing good by experience, and evil by contrast, "that ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust"



Temptation of Eve.

"There is a rude but very remarkable picture on an early Babylonish cylinder in the British Museum, which represents a tree, with a human figure seated on either side of it; their hands are stretched out as if to pluck its fruit; behind one of the figures is a serpent in an erect position."—Walsh.

6. And when the woman saw that the tree ^{was} good for food, and that it ^{was pleasant} to the eyes, and ^{that the} tree ^{was} to be desired to make ^{one} wise, she took of the fruit thereof, ^{and} and did eat; ^{and she} gave also unto her husband with her; ² and he did eat.

¹ 1 Tim. 2: 14.

² Vs. 12, 17.

(2 Pet. 1: 4). Satan's character and misery are the natural fruit of his way, and God's character and heaven are the fruit of the other way. The good know both good and evil better than the bad can.

POINTS OF CONTACT WITH MODERN LIFE.

1. "Temptation comes like a serpent; like the most subtle beast of the field; like that one creature which is said to exert a fascinating influence on its victims, fastening them with its glittering eye, stealing upon them by its noiseless, low and unseen approach." — *Dods*.

2. The evil in man coming by influences from without, — a power of evil suggestion other than man's own thoughts, — leaves more hope for him than if he alone were the originator of all. His nature is not so hardened nor his heart so black. The very existence of Satan gives more assurance of man's possible redemption.

3. Men who have experienced evil and live in it, "will, some of them, be very clever and ingenious persons, and will owe much of their wit to their lack of innocence. As against the innocent — the dwellers, as it were, in Eden, these knowing sinners can always assert that there is something more advanced — more Godlike, as the serpent said, in their wisdom than in the ignorance of those who cannot conceive of sin, . . . which often makes evil so keenly attractive in the eyes of the young and curious. It was just in this half-truth that the wisdom of the original serpent consisted." — *Professor Royce* in *Studies of Good and Evil*. So Johnson's Rasselas was not satisfied even in the Happy Valley, and took infinite pains to escape its perfections. Compare Professor James' feelings of weariness amid the ideal perfections of Chautauqua, as humorously described in his "Talks to Teachers." Right here lies one of the sharpest temptations of the young. They want to know the fascinations of evil, thinking they already know the good.

COMPARE Charles Lamb's boyhood experience as told in his essay on "The Last Peach" in *Essays of Elia*, and in *Crabbe's Tales*, the story of one of the boy attendants on Haroun Al Raschid, in the garden.

"Too long he stayed forbidden bliss to view,
His virtue failing as his longing grew."

ILLUSTRATION. There is a curious little picture in Munich, called *The Red Fisherman*. The devil in red costume is fishing for men who are like fishes in a pond. The bait on his hook consists of gold coins, but near him are other kinds of bait, — crowns, swords, wines, jewels.

4. The tempter gained power over the innocent by first undermining their faith in God. He sowed doubts in their hearts.

5. Every one must fight the battle of life, and gain the victory, if he would be a true man and good. No one can enter upon the great world of life and usefulness without first being tempted and tried. Thus at the beginning of the Christian life comes the great temptation, — the battle as to who shall rule the soul: its success is *conversion*, the entrance upon the new and the true life.

Temptations are trials, with the purpose and desire to make the one tempted to yield and fall.

Tests are trials to prove whether a person or instrument is worthy, with the hope and desire that they shall stand the test. God tests and tries men, but never tempts. But He causes the temptations of Satan to become tests, in order that by choosing good, man may become holy and strong and grand, as an "angel excelling in strength, a perfect man in Christ Jesus. For withal the word had gone forth that no one untempted should attain the heavenly kingdom."

6. THE GUARANTEE WITH TEMPTATION. "No man ever entered a 'blind alley' of temptation. The road of temptation is always a forked road, and one of the forks leads out of the difficulty." — *Sunday School Times*.

V. The Fall, the Battle Lost. — Vs. 6, 7. 6. And when the woman saw. With the eye of her soul as well as of body, found a new charm she had not realized before, as a

tree in the setting sun. There follows the cumulative force of the temptation, — through bodily pleasure, mental delight, intellectual hunger for wisdom. Her faith in God, unseen and almost unknown, was weakened, and the chief barrier to sin was weakened. "The confluence of all these streams made such a current as swept the feeble will clean away; and blind, dazed, deafened by the rush of the stream, Eve was carried over the falls as a man might be over Niagara." — *Maclaren*. **She . . . did eat.** Deliberately chose to disobey God. **Gave also unto her husband with her.** Either he was with her during the temptation, or as Mitchell "when she found him, or he her, she gave him his share of the fruit." **And he did eat.** According to Paul, Adam was not deceived (1 Tim. 2: 14). He disobeyed God with open eyes. He had one more motive to sin than Eve had, his love for her. So often still the wine cup held in the hand of charming woman has made man yield, when the fascinations of the cup alone would have failed. The temptation, according to Dillmann, was the more easily yielded to because Eve, "by first tasting, has already seemingly made proof of its harmlessness." According to Milton's fanciful theory, he partook of the fruit from love to Eve, and desire to perish with her.

"O fairest of Creation, last and best of all God's works,
How can I live without thee!
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe."

7. And the eyes of them both were opened. The knowledge of good and evil which the serpent promised had come to them, but it was not the kind of knowledge they had expected. It came to them as the sight of the horrible features of the veiled prophet of Khorassan to his votress Zelica, when he took away the shining silver veil, and cried,

"See if hell with all its power to damn,
Can add one curse to the vile thing I am."

NOTE that here we see "The Tragedy of Sin," the "Tragedy of the Universe." Sin is not merely the "chips" that necessarily accompany the making of a man. It is not merely the "ape and tiger" of savage ancestors, though Tennyson's exhortation is the duty of all, —

"Arise and fly
The reeling faun, the sensual feast;
Move upward, working out the beast,
And let the ape and tiger die."

NOTE that God is not the author of sin. God did not "ordain sin." He gave man a free will, because only by that gift is goodness possible. Sin is the creation of man, by the action of his own free-will. "The problem (of sin) need expect no better solution in this life, for its depth cannot be fathomed by the sounding line of a finite understanding." — *Encyc. Britannica*.

CONTRAST the Temptation of Jesus, the Second Adam, who gained the victory, and brought redemption into the world where the First Adam had brought ruin.

WOULD YOU HAVE DONE BETTER THAN ADAM AND EVE? You can tell most easily by answering the question, "Have you done better?"

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide
In the strife of truth with falsehood, for the good or evil side."
— *Lowell*.

VI. The Consequences of Sin. — Vs. 7-23.

THE FIRST CONSEQUENCE was that they were ashamed, self-conscious. Without sin there is no shame. The consciousness of nakedness was an expression and figure of their nakedness of soul. They had nowhere to hide from one another or from God. Hitherto they had not wished to hide.

THE SECOND CONSEQUENCE was that they were afraid of their heavenly Father. It would seem that God by some manifestation was accustomed to speak to his children as was most natural. It may have been by a voice alone. It may have been in some human form, although nowhere is it said that they saw any form, as on several occasions the angel of the Lord so appeared. This must have been delightful so long as they were innocent. But as soon as they had disobeyed God, they were afraid. Sin makes cowards of us all.

13. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What ^{is} ^{this} ^{that} thou hast done? And the woman said, ¹ The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

14. And the LORD God said ² unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, ^{thou art} cursed ^{art thou} above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and ³ dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life;

¹ V. 4; ² Cor. 11: 3; ¹ Tim. 2: 14.

² Ex. 21: 29, 32.

³ Isa. 65: 25.

'Thus oft it haps, that when within
They shrink at sense of secret sin,
A feather daunts the brave;

A fool's wild speech confounds the wise,
And proudest princes veil their eyes
Before the meanest slave."
— *Scott's Marmion*.

"My conscience hath a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain."

— *Shakespeare*.

THIRD CONSEQUENCE. MORAL DETERIORATION. 1. When God asked Adam, *Where art thou?* he was *untruthful*, in evading the real reason for his hiding, and refusing to acknowledge his sin.

God's question, "WHERE ART THOU?" is still sounding in the ears of every man.

2. He showed his *folly*, "the twin brother of sin," by trying to hide from God. Sin is always foolish as well as wicked.

3. He was *cowardly* in laying the blame of his disobedience on his wife.

4. The worst punishment is moral degradation. As F. W. Robertson says: "The worst of punishments, a degradation worse than the agonies of hell itself, the punishment of being degraded and not knowing his own degradation."

ILLUSTRATION. The man in the poem of Hall Caine's *The Bondman*, from his earliest youth, had been chained to a being who ever kept behind him and held him back in his every endeavor to attain to something better. This being blasted his crops, and was ruining his family. At last he began a death struggle against his enemy, and, as they grappled in the last fight, he saw the face of his enemy. It was HIMSELF.

FOURTH CONSEQUENCE. THE INJURY TO OTHERS. While each child that comes into the world makes his own choice as really as Adam did, yet Adam's sin brought unfavorably inherited tendencies and environment.

13. **The serpent beguiled me.** Eve sought to minimize her guilt by reference to the serpent, but she told the exact truth.

14. **Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above (or among) all cattle.** The other animals were not cursed. **Upon thy belly shalt thou go.** Degraded, repulsive, insidious, deadly; a type and illustration to man of the condemnation of Satan, who is base, mean, crawling, insidious, instead of the winged angel he was made to be. The most effective way of teaching early man was by symbols.

NOTE that it is not said, though some have inferred it, that the serpent ever had any other form than he has now, ever had an upright position.

"The truth is, that as the rainbow became a glorious token after the flood, though it had always existed, so after the fall the serpent's form and attitude became a badge of shame and repulsiveness, and thorns and thistles, though they had been created long before, became the symbol of man's curse, and the cause and sign of his weariness and toil." — *Rev. John E. Todd*.

As Dillmann says: "The principal point is, that man should recognize in this deeply degraded creature, creeping in the dust, wriggling quickly along, forcing its way everywhere, wickedly sly, hissing and fork-tongued, a speaking likeness of the evil power reprobated by God."

FIFTH CONSEQUENCE (v. 16). A double sorrow to woman. She should suffer in bearing children, and she should suffer through the oppression of man, who would, as a result of his sinful nature, exercise his natural strength and authority to oppress her. The phrase to *thy husband shall be thy desire*, is rightly interpreted by Mitchell to mean that her very affection and devotion to her husband would enable him to make and keep her his inferior, a wrong which Christianity is working to undo.

15. ^{And} I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between ¹thy seed and ²her seed: ³it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

¹ Matt. 3: 7; John 8: 44; Acts 13: 10.

² Psa. 132: 11; Isa. 7: 14; Matt. 1: 23, 25; Luke 1: 31.

³ Rom. 16: 20.

SIXTH CONSEQUENCE. Upon man there was inflicted the curse of hard and bitter toil, instead of the work that was like the exercise of play in Eden.

SEVENTH CONSEQUENCE. DEATH.

"We must not think that if man had not sinned his body would not have passed away, that death would not have been. No; but that death, by sin, became death; otherwise it would have been simply a transition to a higher state of being." — *Robertson*. The meaning is suggested by the translation of Enoch, Moses, and Elijah, and the transformation of the body at the resurrection.

As Alford well says, "It is not sufficiently borne in mind that man's exclusion from the tree of life was the carrying out of this sentence."

Moreover, there was spiritual death, the beginning of the loss of all that makes life worth living. "The sting of death is sin."

EIGHTH CONSEQUENCE. BANISHMENT from their Eden home.

NINTH CONSEQUENCE. A PERPETUAL CONFLICT. 15. **I will put enmity . . . between thy seed and her seed.** "The peculiar and inveterate dislike of the human race to everything of the serpent kind, which is apparently fully reciprocated, has often been remarked." This was a perpetual symbolic representation of the conflict between the Satanic being who made use of the serpent, and the children of men, a warfare not yet ended, but raging as intensely as ever. **It (the woman's seed) shall bruise thy head,** etc. An allusion to the serpent's habit of hiding itself in a path and attacking the feet of the passer-by, who then stamps him to death. Mitchell thinks this has nothing to suggest as to the triumph of the woman's seed over the serpent, because "a blow on the head is no more serious to the serpent, than a poisonous wound in the heel to its hereditary enemy." But nothing is said about a poisonous serpent, and the head and the heel are typical ever of a dangerous wound, and one painful but not deadly.

Satan can injure men; he can arouse persecution; he can bring calamity, as to Job; he can bruise the heel of Christians, — their lower and human nature; but they can wholly conquer him by the victory which Jesus Christ gives them. Satan bruised Christ's heel in Gethsemane and on the cross; but Jesus Christ gained the victory over Satan, and will utterly defeat him.

Of the final victory of man over evil, by Jesus Christ, nothing could have been known to early man, but he could see victory for himself and descendants, with such comfort of hope as we look forward to the final triumph of the millennial days.

"Two interpretations have been given the words of Gen. 3: 15: (1) The bruising of the head indicates a fatal result; that of the heel temporary harm. Or, (2) according to others, the warfare will be conducted openly on the one hand, and on the other by insidious attack." — *Pres. W. R. Harper*.



Tree of Life Guarded by Winged Figures.

"Several instances of the tree of life guarded by winged figures have been found on Assyrian monuments." — *Layard*.

This story "is a picture into which every man may look and see himself, and shudder at the terrible cost of sin. It is the greatest sermon ever preached to man as a warning against sin; a sermon which millions have read and millions more will read; a sermon which will never cease to be read so long as man is man and God is God. But there is also here a promise; a prediction of a time when man will conquer his great enemy, sin; when light will once more take the place of night; peace, the place of war; life, eternal life, the place of death; the seed of the woman shall eventually gain the victory." — *Pres. W. R. Harper.*

"We ourselves
When we commit a sin lose paradise
As much as he did. Let us think of this,
And how we may regain it."
— *Longfellow.*

LESSON IV. — January 27.

THE STORY OF CAIN AND ABEL. — Genesis 4: 3-15.

STUDY the Chapter. COMMIT vs. 8-10.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.* — 1 JOHN 3: 15.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Brothers and Friends. Examples like Cain and Abel. Search the Scriptures for such examples as Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brethren. (Mal. 2: 10.) Study the causes of their conduct. Why do members of the same family so often quarrel?

Brothers and Friends. Examples of better results. Abraham and Lot, Moses and Aaron, David and Jonathan.

The Evil Hating the Good. — Psa. 11: 2; 37: 32; 119: 95; Prov. 29: 10; Jer. 11: 19; Hab. 1: 13; Matt. 10: 16; Acts 4: 1-3; 7: 52; 1 Pet. 3: 14, etc. What was the cause of this hatred?

The Cure. — John 13: 34, 35; Rom. 12: 9, 10, 16, 18-21; 13: 8-10; Gal. 5: 13; Phil. 2: 2-4; 1 John 2: 10. Show how love is the cure.

New Testament Light. — Cain was "of that wicked one" (1 John 3: 12), who "was a murderer from the beginning" (John 8: 44). The reason of the difference in the sacrifices is given in Heb. 11: 4. Crimes cry unto God (Jas. 5: 4; Rev. 6: 10). Christ's blood speaketh better things, or louder than the blood of Abel (Heb. 12: 24).

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

The first part of our treatment of this lesson is for the older scholars, who would study the means of the training of man from sin to righteousness and note the beginning of the parting of the ways; though there are hints even here for the younger.

For the younger scholars, we have the story of the two brothers. We may begin with the fact that brothers and sisters so often are at variance, learn the causes, and the cure, and use this story as an example. But dwell on the good more than on the evil.

Caroline Fox, in her *Memories*, tells of a Quaker of literary turn who would not undertake a translation of the Iliad lest he should catch the martial spirit of its heroes. So we should dwell less on the warning than on the example of good.

Cause each scholar to express his opinion, and declare which he would prefer to be like.

I know a man who once asked the children whether they would rather be a lighthouse or a lifeboat. Which was Cain like? And which Abel? And why?

REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Commentaries by Dillmann, Delitzsch, Mitchell, Dods, etc. Ryle's *Early Narratives*. Professor Orr's *Christian View of God and the World*, Lecture V. Alexander Whyte's *Bible Characters*, "Adam to Achan." Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible*, "Abel the Undeveloped." Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, chap. 12, "Legends concerning Cain," also in Baring-Gould's *Legends of the Patriarchs and Pro-*

phets, chaps. 5-7. Professor Hodge's *The Heresy of Cain*.

REFERENCES IN LITERATURE.

The Poets' Bible (Ward & Lock, London) has several poems on Cain and Abel. Byron's "Cain." Montgomery's "A Tale without a Name." Clough's "Mystery of the Fall." Hood's *Dream of Eugene Aram* delineates the murderer's misery. Remorse for sin is pictured in Victor Hugo's poem *La Conscience*, and in *Les Misérables*, "a storm under a skull." Scott's *Marmion*. E. E. Hale's *Man without a Country*. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *Richard III*. "Story of Orestes" in *Æschylus*, p. 128 of *Ancient Classics for English Readers*; the Story of the Wandering Jew, in Tissot's, Farrar's, or Geikie's *Life of Christ*. Joseph Cook's *Conscience*, in his *Monday Lecture* series, gathers illustration from a wide range of literature. Legends concerning Cain in Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, chap. 12.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The First Crime, — Its Cause and Its Punishment.

- I. CONDITIONS OF THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF MAN.
- II. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE ASCENT OF MAN.
The voice of God.
The penalties on Adam and Eve.
Man in an evil world.
- III. THE TWO BROTHERS (v. 3).
Their characters. Religious training.
Business.
The two lines of progress.
- IV. THE TWO SACRIFICES (vs 3-7).
Wherein they differed.
- V. THE FIRST MURDER (v. 8).
- VI. THE AVENGER (vs. 9-15).
My brother's keeper.
The voice of Abel's blood.
Cain's punishment.
The Cain-mark.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING MORAL QUESTIONS IN ACTUAL LIFE.

Are you ever in a passion at home?
What is the sin and the danger in it?
How will you treat those who injure you?
In what are you your brother's keeper?

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 9, 10; 1 John 3: 11; Rom. 12: 21.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Blest be the tie that binds."
"Think gently of the erring one."

HISTORICAL SETTING.

The time is unknown. According to Ussher's chronology it was B. C. 3875. But it is generally understood that this is not correct.

According to the history the lesson belongs 125 to 130 years after the expulsion from Eden, for Adam was 130 years old when Seth was born, which event is represented as not long after the death of Abel. Again, Cain's complaint (v. 14) implies that there was quite a population at that time, and this would require a considerable period.

Place. — Outside of the Garden of Eden, but probably in the same region, which whole region was called Eden, near the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers.

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Cain and Abel, characters of.
What was the differences in their sacrifices?
Why did Cain hate Abel?
"Am I my brother's keeper?"
Whose blood speaketh better things than the blood of Abel? Find the passage.
What things did the blood of Abel speak?
The Cain-mark.
The punishment of Cain.

I. Conditions of the Early Development of Man. — The narrative in this chapter belongs to what the critics call the "J" (Jehovah) stories, being a continuation of the narrative in our last lesson. But it is to be remembered always that the date of the writing of an account is a very different thing from the date of the event recorded, and that whatever be the order of the dates of writing the history, the order of the events, and of the development of the race, must have been as given in Genesis.

THE EVOLUTIONARY THEORY. A theory of the evolution of Man slowly through thousands or hundreds of thousands of years, from a primitive savage not far above the ape, has been held by many scholars, and stands in contradiction to the fall of man and his state as described in the Bible.

But there is a very strong reaction against this theory, as no necessary part of the evolution of man, and there is nothing in theistic evolution which disagrees with the Bible story. Although it may know nothing about it, it leaves room for it.

The time is greatly shortened.

The earliest skulls of man found in what is called the Stone age are "not inferior to the lowest of existing men" (*Rice*). No intermediate link has been found. "Geology confirms the belief that Man is not of Nature's making" (*Rice-Dana*). Sudden jumps and leaps in development are now clearly recognized. The earliest monuments of man carry us back more than 4,000 years. "In the Delta of the Nile civilization rapidly advanced, and the calendar year of 365 days was introduced in 4241 B. C., the earliest fixed date in the history of the world known to us" (*Breasted, Hist. Egypt, 1905*). "Instead of finding man more savage as we push his history backward in Egypt and Babylonia, we find him possessed of most of the elements of civilization — and I shall add of purer ideas of divine things — than he subsequently entertained" (*Professor Orr, God's Image in Man, 1905*).

This is exactly what we should expect from the Bible account, of man with a soul in God's image, and with an early revelation of some kind from God. It would not take man many years or generations to arrive at some degree of "the letters, laws, religion, cities, temples," which characterize the earliest discoveries of early man.

All this is confirmed by the fact that savage life seems to be a degradation of man, not his original state. "The rude and degraded races are, as a rule, not found near the center of distribution, but in outlying parts, . . . in the farthest extremities." "To all which I may add, that there is yet no evidence of a really degraded or savage tribe having raised itself out of its degradation without contact with a prior higher civilization. . . . The statement of Dr. Whately stands yet unrefuted that 'no authenticated instance can be produced of savages that ever *did emerge unaided* from that state.'" — *Professor Orr of Glasgow*.

We are now prepared to study the beginnings of the moral development of man which has continued till this day.

II. The Beginnings of the Ascent of Man. — In the last lesson we saw the punishment of sin in the consequences that came in its train. Man could never again be what he might have been, had he chosen right instead of wrong, at least, till the individual becomes a saint, and the race the kingdom of God. Compare the poem of the "Bird with a Broken Wing."

At the same time, God does all that is possible under the circumstances, and makes every form of punishment remedial. Plutarch says that punishment is a twin birth with sin. It is quite as true to say that the remedy is a twin birth with the punishment. In each penal consequence of sin we can find also a remedial agent.

"For God in cursing gives us better gifts
Than man in benediction."

What Robert Browning teaches as our task in this world of sin and sorrow, expresses also the work God has set for himself, —

"The common problem, yours, mine, every one's,
Is not to fancy what were fair in life,
Provided it could be, but, finding first
What may be, then how to make it fair
Up to our means — a very different thing!"

The promise of conflict and victory to the seed of the woman was a rainbow of hope on the storm. So in the Greek legend of Pandora's box, out of which flew all the evils that afflict the world, Hope lay in the bottom of the box.

So in Mrs. Browning's "Drama of Exile," the angel chorus sings: —

"Exiled human creatures,
Let your hope grow larger,
Larger grows the vision
Of the new delight.

"Calm the stars and golden
In a light exceeding;
What their rays have measured
Let your feet fulfil!

"These are stars beholden
By your eyes in Eden,
Yet across the desert
See them shining still.

"Hear us singing gently,
Exiled is not lost.

"Hear us sing above you
EXILED, BUT NOT LOST."

There is a Talmud legend that Adam and Eve had never seen the sunset in Eden before they were expelled on account of their sin. But outside of Eden, "as the light grew

paler, the wretched ones clasped one another in an agony of despair. Then all grew dark, and the luckless ones fell on the earth silent, and thought that God had withdrawn his light forever. They spent the night in tears. At length a beam of light began to rise over the Eastern hills, after many hours of darkness, and the clouds blushed crimson, and the golden sun came back and dried the tears of Adam and Eve, and they greeted it with cries of gladness, saying, 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.'"

But all the hope comes from God their Creator and Father. Man cannot "fasten wings on a rattlesnake, and make it into a love-bird." But God can change the nature of man, and by a new moral creation, "make brutes men, and men divine."

1. The voice of God that reproved was a voice they needed to hear. They needed a manifestation of God, a revelation from him, even more than their descendants have needed it ever since. And if God has seen fit to reveal himself in many ways since, it would be very strange, indeed, if he did not now in their hour of need. Charles Kingsley has put the case well when he says, that as children are trained and taught by their parents' voice, and manifested love, so God as a Father must have let his first children hear his voice. He asks, "Where did they get Religion?" *Answer*: "And they heard the voice of the Lord God. To say that God cannot appear to men is silly. . . . To say that God will not appear to man is to limit God's goodness; nay, it is to show that man knows not what goodness is." Language is a priceless gift for the education of man.

2. The fact that they were afraid of God on account of their consciousness of sin is a sign that life and goodness and redemption are possible. "In a race utterly and totally evil there could be no consciousness of evil." "Evil is known as sin, only when good is known as the will and command and ideal of a personal and holy God." "The sense of sin is a step toward the light." — *Prof. Henry Van Dyke in Gospel for an Age of Sin*. It is a wise saying that "our great security against sin lies in being shocked at it."

"An aged minister speaks to a sinful but weeping penitent, 'You have sinned and suffered for your sin. You have asked your heavenly Father to forgive you, and he has forgiven you. But still you suffer. Woman, be thankful that you can suffer. The worst trouble in the world is the trouble that does not know God, and so does not suffer.' " — *Margaret Deland in Old Chester Tales*.

3. The sense of shame was a sign of hope. Professor Dodds may be right in saying that "the clothing in coats of skins indicates the restoration of man not indeed to pristine innocence, but to peace with God. Adam felt that God did not wish to banish him lastingly from his presence."

4. There was hope in the fact that the temptation came from without, showing that sinfulness is no part of human nature, but a perversion of it.

5. There is hope in the fact that they chose evil of their own free will; for, therefore, they are free to repent and to choose good.

6. The penalty upon woman of suffering for her children and through her affections, contained also a spiritual remedy. "She shall be saved through the child-bearing, if they continue in faith and love" (1 Tim. 2: 15). "And a little child shall lead them," and teach them. One of the great uplifting powers is the training of our children. Well says F. W. Robertson: "This penalty of suffering for others, which is the very triumph of the cross, know we not its blessing? Know we not that in proportion as we suffer for another we love that other; that in proportion as the mother suffers for her child she is repaid by that love?" Compare what the hope of some child who should be the Messiah has done for Hebrew women; and how the hope that the children might grow up good enough to have part in the Oberammergau play, has lifted up that village above all around it.

7. The exile from Eden, and the toil and burdens imposed on man for sin, enclosed a great blessing. What would have been bad in Eden was necessary for the good of fallen man. See what the necessity for labor has done for civilization in the temperate zones compared with the torrid zones.

After man had sinned, Eden was the worst place in the world for him; idleness, ease, and pleasure would have quickly completed his ruin. Hope for him lay in the necessity of labor. The very punishment was remedial. We often dream of Edens. We long for a life without pain or sorrow or burden. We sing,

"Oh, could I do with this world of ours
As thou dost with thy garden bowers,

Reject the weeds and keep the flowers,
What a heaven on earth we'd make it."

But God always casts us out in order that we may gain the real and eternal paradise.

8. Eternal existence in such a world with such a heart would be no blessing. The shortness of life diminishes the power to do evil. What monsters of iniquity would we see,

3. And ^a in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought ¹ of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

^a Hebrew, at the end of days.

¹ Num. 18: 12.

if bad men could live among us, and worse and worse for ages. Death itself would aid as a motive in leading men to return to God, and to those who returned would be the gate of paradise. See Macaulay's "Death and Sisyphus," in his *Lost Tales of Miletus*.

9. The conflict between the descendants of Eve, and the kingdom represented by the serpent, has continued to this day, and is one of the great educating forces of the human race.

"If only we strive to be pure and true,
To each of us there will come an hour
When the tree of life shall burst into flower,
And rain at our feet the glorious dower
Of something grander than ever we knew."

III. The Two Brothers. — V. 3. There is nothing in the account to show that Cain and Abel were the only children of Adam and Eve up to the time of this story; but these two were selected because they were the beginning of two lines of moral divergence which have continued till to-day, the sons of Man, and the sons of God, together with the actions and qualities of each.

"The picture of Cain and Abel portrayed how from the first opposition has subsisted between good and evil, between faith and self-will, between obedience and lawlessness. The two brothers brought up in the same family, became the types, the one of sin, the other of righteousness." — *Ryle*. See Diagram in Lesson V.

CAIN. "Acquisition," something Eve had "created," "acquired." Probably her first-born child. He seems to have had a strong physical personality, but little of the spiritual. He was enterprising; he was a man of passionate temper, morose, zealous, self-centered, of an active disposition, rough and strenuous, reminding us of Esau. Perhaps Clough is right when he makes Cain say,

"Something I must do individual
To vindicate my nature, to give proof
I also am as Adam, a man."

Byron in his *Cain*, pictures him as tempted by Lucifer to unbelief and rebellion against God's providence.

ABEL means "breath," "vapor," that vanisheth away. Probably the name was "a title given to him after his untimely death. Giving names to children would become usual only when population increased; and it was not till a religious rite was instituted for their dedication to God that they had names given to them in their infancy. Even then Esau was changed to Edom, and Jacob to Israel." — *Ellicott*. He seems to have been of a gentler disposition, spiritually minded, more refined and thoughtful, inclined to moral and spiritual progress as Cain was to worldly advancement. Their character was shown in their occupations. "Some, like Abel, choose peaceful callings that draw out feeling and sympathy; others prefer pursuits which are stirring and active. Cain chose the tillage of the ground, partly no doubt from the necessity of the case, but probably also with the feeling that he could subdue nature to his own purposes notwithstanding the curse that lay upon it." — *Dods*.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR CHARACTERS. They doubtless had natural differences of disposition, and yet not so great as to account for the results. They had similar training and home influences, but gradually, by their early choices, by the working out of natural tendencies, they must have grown very far apart in character. The only explanation of the difference between them lies in their freedom of choice. One chose the way of life, the other the way of death.

IV. The Two Sacrifices, True and False Worship. — Vs. 3-7. 3. In process of time. An indefinite note of time. It probably was many years. (See "Historical Setting.") Cain brought of the fruit of the ground. The products of his business, as was natural and proper. An offering unto the Lord, Jehovah, who had made himself known in the garden, and probably since. Offering, a sacrificial gift to God. In what form were these offerings presented to God? Was there an altar of worship? What could be done with the gifts? Was there a family religious feast? They were certainly some form

JANUARY 27.

THE STORY OF CAIN AND ABEL.

GENESIS 4: 3-15.

4. And A'bēl, he also brought of ¹ the firstlings of his ^a flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had ² respect unto A'bēl and to his offering:

5. ^{But} ^{but} unto Cāin and to his offering he had not respect. And Cāin was very wroth, ³ and his countenance fell.

6. And the LORD said unto Cāin, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

7. If thou doest well, shalt thou not ^b be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin ^{lieth} ^{coucheth} at the door: ^{And} ^{and} ^c unto thee ^{shall be} ^{shall be} his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.

¹ Num. 18: 17; Prov. 3: 9.

² Heb. 11: 4.

³ Gen. 31: 2.

^a Hebrew, *sheep* or *goats*.

^b Or, *shall it not be lifted up?*

^c Or, *is its desire, but thou shouldest rule over it.*

of worship of God. The offerings were the outward expression of religious feeling. Nor can we know how this method of worship originated, — whether, as some think, it grew out of the natural instinct of worship, or whether it was taught by God to early man as the teaching by types and actions of great and needful truths, which early men could not originate themselves, but which were essential to best life and adapted to his needs.

4. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock. "Either the firstborn, which God afterwards demanded (Ex. 13: 12), or the choicest and best (Job 18: 13)." — Cook. And of the fat thereof. Literally, *the fattest of them, i. e., the fattest of the firstlings, the best he had, or, as Dillmann, "their fat pieces,"* the part to be burned. The Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering. "It is impossible to know in what way the Lord showed his favor, but it was, in any case, a visible sign of satisfaction." — Keil.

5. Unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. The difference did not lie in the offerings, but in the men, and in the offerings only so far as they represented the character of the men. Note that in the account the MAN is put before the offering. "ABEL and his offering," "CAIN and his offering." The difference in the men is seen in what came from them. Anger, envy, hate, murder, and lying came from Cain, and proved that he was no true worshiper (see I John 3: 12). He offered the shell not the meat, the purse not the jewels, the body without a soul, the form without the spirit. The author of Hebrews (11: 4) tells us, that "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent (a more complete) sacrifice than Cain." Faith implies here a heart of obedience and love, a right disposition toward God. Some one has said that "the best part of a sermon is the man behind it." It is equally true of every act of worship. Even Plato says, "It would be strange if the gods looked to gifts and sacrifices, and not to the soul" (*Alcib. ii.*, 149). And Bunyan, "The fruit does not make a good tree, but a good tree bringeth forth good fruit."

Hence v. 7 the Lord said, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" or "lifted up" (Am. Ver.). The fault lies in your own conduct. Look there, not at Abel. 5. And Cain was very wroth (literally, *it burned with Cain exceedingly*). Anger is like an ungoverned fire in the soul. His countenance fell. "The expression originated in the fact that, under the influence of angry and moody feelings, men are apt to go about with their heads hanging down." Thus we say such a man is "dejected," "depressed," "chap-fallen."

THE ANGER OF CAIN. (1) It was against his brother. (2) It was without good cause. (3) It grew out of envy and jealousy. (4) It was intensified by his own consciousness of being in the wrong, and the desire to quiet his conscience by blaming others. (5)



A Transjordanian Dolmen.

"One found in the neighborhood of Ammán; others seem to have been holy places and altars from the beginning." — Maspero.

8. And Cāin ^{told} A'bēl his brother: ^{and} it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cāin rose up against A'bēl his brother, and ¹ slew him.

9. And the LORD said unto Cāin, ² Where ^{is} A'bēl thy brother? And he said, ³ I know not: ^{Am} I my brother's keeper?

¹ Matt. 23: 35; 1 John 3: 12; Jude 11.

² Psa. 9: 12.

³ John 8: 44.

It was anger against God. (6) It was violent, ill-tempered, beyond the control of reason. (7) It was the feeling of hatred in the wicked toward those who are better because they are a continual reproof.

7. **If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door, your own door.** You, yourself, only are to blame. "The sin is not Abel's nor any one's but thine own, and, therefore, anger at another is not the proper remedy, but anger at yourself, and repentance." — *Dods*. The *Revisions* translate "sin coucheth at the door." "The sinful act crouches greedily like a beast of prey at the door of his heart till he shall step out and fall a victim to it." — *Delitzsch*. (Dillmann and Mitchell oppose this view.) **And unto thee shall be his desire.** Sin is as eager for your soul as a wild beast is for its prey. See Luke 22: 31; 1 Pet. 5: 8. **And thou shalt rule over him.** The pronouns "his" and "him" refer to sin here conceived of as a beast of prey. All ambiguity is removed in the margin of the revision by rendering "unto thee is its desire, but thou shouldst rule over it." Compare the picture of sin in Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

V. **The First Murder.** — V. 8. **And Cain talked with Abel his brother.** "Hebrew, 'And Cain said unto Abel his brother'; after which there is, in many of the Hebrew copies, a blank space left, as if something had been omitted." — *Bush*. He talked over the matter with his brother. He went on in familiar intercourse with him, and it was during one of these conversations that his anger was again inflamed. Others represent Cain as asking his brother to go away from the home into a lonely field for the purpose of doing evil to him. **Cain . . . slew him.** Whether he intended to kill, or struck a blow in anger, and the result was more than he expected, we do not know.

NOTE. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3: 15). Murder is the outward expression of hate.

NOTE. "Envy is the wickedest, the deadliest, the most detestable of all our sinful passions. A coal from hell had by this time kindled hell in Cain's heart." — *Alexander Whyte*.

VI. **The Avenger.** — Vs. 9-15. 9. **And the Lord said unto Cain.** How God spoke, we know not, but we know that to us God speaks by the voices of his Word, of our consciences, and of his Holy Spirit, by society, by the consequences of our sin, asking us the same question he asked Cain. "Our sin is like touching the electric bells which people sometimes put on their windows to give notice of thieves. As soon as we step beyond the line of duty we set the alarm going, and it wakens the sleeping conscience." — *MacLaren*. **Where is Abel thy brother?** "The word *brother* is introduced no less than seven times in the short narrative, as if to call attention to the unnatural character of the crime." — *Todd*. "As God asked Adam, Where art thou? he now asks Cain, Where is thy brother?" — *Delitzsch*. **And he said, I know not.** A direct falsehood. The current Moslem tradition is founded on a Jewish one, which states that "Cain was not aware of the Lord's knowledge of hidden things: he therefore sought to make one sin cover up another; but the denial only made two sins instead of one." **Am I my brother's keeper?** Is it my business to keep track of him, and know what he is doing? Have you placed me over him?

AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER? Only Cain-like men ask Cain's question. We all are our brother's keepers. God has made the circles of family, friendship, acquaintance, race, humanity, so that each of us has an influence in them, and we are responsible for that influence. No one lives or dies to himself. And God gives us wealth, position, intellect, not for ourselves alone, but that we may be better keepers of our brother. (1) We are keepers of our brothers, not by dictating to them, but by brotherly love; (2) by helping them, as the good Samaritan, or as the righteous in Matt. 25: 31-46; (3) by considering their welfare in all our business relations; (4) by using every influence for their good, doing to others in all relations "as we would that they should do unto us."

10. And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood ¹ crieth unto me from the ground.

11. And now ^{art thou} cursed ^{art thou} from the ^{earth,} ^{ground,} which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;

¹ Heb. 12: 24; Rev. 6: 10.

COMPARE Ruskin on Bishops in *Sesame and Lilies*. Note the duties of parents to children, employers to employed.

10. **The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.** On which it was spilled, or in which the body was buried. Abel's body was dead; but his cause was not dead, and his avengers were not dead. Cain's effort was a complete failure. No power on earth can silence the voice that demands the punishment of sin; for (1) the memories of it cling to the place where it was committed. (2) The fact of the sin can never be obliterated. (3) Everything associated with the sin recalls the sin itself.

So Polonius, the murderer, in *Hamlet*, cries,

"Oh! my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
It hath the primal eldest curse upon it,
A brother's murder."

Daniel Webster in his great plea at the trial of the Knapps, exclaims, "He had done the murder. No eye has seen him, no ear has heard him. The secret is his own, and it is safe. Ah, that was a dreadful mistake. Such a secret can be safe nowhere. The whole creation of God has neither nook nor corner where the guilty can bestow it and say it is safe."

Hood's poem, *The Dream of Eugene Aram*, represents this man, a school-teacher, as having murdered a man. After that he could not look in the faces of the innocent children. He buried the body, but had to take it up; he plunged it in a stream, but the stream ran dry; he covered it with leaves, but the wind blew them away.

"I knew my secret then was one
The earth refused to keep,
Or land, or sea, though he should be
Ten thousand fathoms deep.

COMPARE the 139th Psalm.

THE VOICE OF ABEL STILL HEARD. (1) "The blood that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb. 12: 24). "He being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11: 4). Here is a fine picture of Abel's work. He is living and speaking down all the centuries, one long triumphal march, scattering blessed gems of truth to all ages, like Prince Siddhartha in his father's dream in *The Light of Asia*. Cut off in his prime, his life-work, seemingly arrested, is going on. His blood speaking of God's justice against sin, and warning men from its evil path, yet points to the blood of Christ which speaketh the better things of redemption from sin, of the Cain-mark washed away, of the outcast coming to his heavenly home.



From Breasted's "History of Egypt," C. Scribner's Sons.

Flint Knife of the Predynastic Age.

With sheet gold handle, ornamented with designs in repoussé. "Evidently the two sides of the flint knife are given in the picture; of which this knife is an example."—*After de Morgan*.

And lo! the universal air
Seemed lit with ghastly flame;
Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes
Were looking down in blame."

12. ^{When} thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a ^{vagabond} ^{wanderer} shalt thou be in the earth.

13. And Cain said unto the LORD, ^a My punishment ^{is} greater than I can bear.

14. ¹ Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; ^{and} ² from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a ^{vagabond} ^{wanderer} in the earth; and it shall come to pass, ³ ^{that every one that} ^{that whosoever} findeth me shall slay me.

¹ Job 15: 20-24.
² Psa 51: 11.

³ Gen. 9: 6; Num. 35: 19.
^a Or, *Mine iniquity is greater than that it may be forgiven.*

"Oh, may I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence." — *George Eliot.*

11. And now art thou cursed from the earth. R. v., "ground." This means, as stated in the next verse (1) that the curse proceeds from the earth, which execrates and loathes him, and will refuse to bestow its gifts upon him or to tolerate his hateful presence; the personification is like that in Lev. 18: 25. (2) That "Cain is cursed by being driven from the cultivated soil, into the wild, uncultivated waste." So also *Mitchell*.

12. When thou tillest the ground, etc. The ground would not yield its strength to Cain, because (1) he was to wander away from cultivated fields into the wilder regions. (2) His restless, roving life would keep him from giving his due attention to the soil, for the fertile valleys would be too populous.

13. My punishment. The word includes the sin, together with its guilt and punishment. Is greater than I can bear, endure. The character of Cain is shown in this plea. He thought more of relief from the consequences of his sin than of pardon and deliverance from his sinful nature. But the chief work of punishment is to show to men the evil of sin. It is the divine expression of its awful nature, written in language that all men can read.

CAIN'S PUNISHMENT consisted (1) in the strengthening of his evil character. He added lying and selfishness to murder. (2) He set himself in opposition to God and his laws, changing from the light of blessings to the evils that are the necessary consequences of defying God's laws. (3) His life-work was a failure. (4) He lost the blessings of companionship with the good. He was lonely, estranged from his kind, an outlaw. Compare Eugene Sue's *Wandering Jew* and the legends of Judas. (5) Remorse and the condemnation of his conscience.

"But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts
Benighted walks under the midday sun,
Himself is his own dungeon." — *Milton, Comus.*

14. I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond. Even in that little Oriental city he built (v. 17).

"He found, where'er he roamed, uncheered, unblest,
No pause from suffering, and from toil no rest."

Like the Ancient Mariner.

"This soul hath been
Alone on a wide, wide sea,
So lonely 'twas that God himself
Scarce seemed there to be."

Every one that findeth me shall slay me. There must have been quite a population by this time. "Old Thomas Fuller tells us that Lady Hester Temple, of Buckinghamshire, at her death left more than *seven hundred* descendants." Betsey Shelton, of Webster County, Kentucky, who was born in North Carolina in 1798, and was still living in moderate health in 1894, was the mother of 14 children, the grandmother of 117, the great-grandmother of 282, and the great-great-grandmother of 19 — a total of 432 descendants. Shall slay me. The people, all relatives, would be indignant and repel such a man. Cain imagined they would hate him and slay him, for he knew he deserved death.

15. And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cāin, vengeance shall be taken on him ¹ sevenfold. And the LORD ² set a mark upon Cāin, lest any finding him should kill him. appointed

¹ Psa. 79: 12.

² Ezek. 9: 4, 6.

COMPARE (1) Victor Hugo's beautiful poem, *La Conscience*, perhaps derived from the story of Cain fleeing away before the eye of God. He walks thirty days and thirty nights, until he reaches the shores of the ocean. "Let us stop here," says he. But as he sits down his face turns pale; he has seen "in the mournful skies the Eye at the same place." His sons, full of awe, try to erect barriers between him and the eye: a tent, then a wall of iron, then a tower and a city; but all is vain. "I see the Eye still," cries the unhappy man. At last they dig a tomb; the father is put into it. But

"Though overhead they closed the awful vault,
The Eye was in the tomb, and looked on Cain." — *Reuben Saillens*.

(2) "When, in the *Eumenides* of Æschylus, Orestes sees the furies everywhere pursuing him, we recognize it as dramatically true to nature. It is indeed a strange aspect of the human soul that the poet presents, but it has its ground in its deeper consciousness." — *Prof. Tayler Lewis*.

15. Therefore, that no more blood be shed, no blood revenge be cherished. Sevenfold, completely, more severely than Cain, because it would be against more clearly defined law, against greater knowledge of consequences, over stronger barriers and warnings. Compare v. 24. **Set a mark upon Cain.** R. V. "appointed a sign for Cain." Probably some sort of sign on his person, since to have the effect mentioned it is almost necessarily to be thought of as constantly accompanying him, and, therefore, as attached to his person. So Dillmann, Mitchell, Delitzsch. With the sign on his forehead, or elsewhere, went the widespread knowledge that it was a warning against injuring him.

"Silently, swiftly as the lightning's blast
A hand of fire athwart his temples passed."

LESSON V.—February 3.

NOAH SAVED IN THE ARK.—Genesis 8: 1-16.

READ Genesis 6-9. COMMIT vs. 1-3.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord.*—Psa. 37: 39.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Find the following references in Scripture to Noah and the flood, and from them discover the testimony to the truth of the narrative, and the teaching which the Bible

draws from it: Psa. 29: 10, R. V.; Isa. 54: 9; Ezek. 14: 14; Matt. 24: 37; Luke 17: 26, 27; Heb. 11: 7; 1 Pet. 3: 20; 2 Pet. 2: 5.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Character-forming is the main aim of Bible study, and, therefore, while the story itself, uncomplicated with other problems, carries with it essential practical truth, yet the teacher should apply its teaching most earnestly.

There are so many literary and historical questions of deep interest in connection with this period, that it will be well for any older class to have a special meeting some evening to take up these questions and dis-

cuss them. But in the class the emphasis should be upon the bearing of this narrative on present daily living.

It is necessary in these Notes to cover the whole ground, but the teacher can select those portions especially adapted to the class under his charge.

LEARN BY HEART.

Heb. 11: 7; 1 Pet. 3: 20, 21; John 3: 16.

THE PERIOD COVERED BY THE LESSON

includes Genesis 6-9, and other Biblical references to the story.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Professor Pinches' *Old Testament in the Light of the Historical Records*. Lenormant's *Beginnings of History*. Prof. G. F. Wright's *Scientific Aspects of Christian Evidences*, "Mediate Miracles," "The Noachian Deluge." Kent's, *Beginnings of Hebrew History*. Kingsley's *Gospel of the Pentateuch*, "Noah's Flood." Mathe-son's *Representative Men*, "Noah the Renewer." Whyte's *Bible Characters*, "Noah."

The stories combined in the account we have are shown as separated by the Higher Critics in Professor Bacon's *Genesis of Genesis* by different kinds of type, and by different colors in Professor Bissell's *Genesis Printed in Colors*.

See Tatian's *Diatessaron* as the only extant early example of combined accounts that can be tested.

REFERENCES TO LITERA- TURE.

Jean Ingelow's *Poems*, "A Story of Doom." Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book XI. Thomas Moore's *Poems*, "Sweet Dove that Homeward Winged." Campbell's *Poems*, "To the Rainbow." The tract, "Noah's Carpenters" (*Am. Tract Soc.*). The booklet, *The Man on Top of the Ark* (*Willard Tract Repository*). Muhlenberg's *The Soul's Home*. Montgomery's *Poem*, "At Home in Heaven."

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The two documents.
The progress of the world up to this time.
The two lines of development of the race.
Good men in bad times.
Possible ways of dealing with a bad race.
Traditions of the deluge.
How Noah showed his faith.
Noah and the deluge in the New Testament.
The rainbow sign of God's promises.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Like Noah's weary dove,"
"Forever with the Lord."

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DE- CIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Will you be like Noah, a good person even among bad people and in bad times?
Will you, like him, have faith in God's way of salvation?

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—According to Ussher's Chronology, B. C. 2348, but this calculation is regarded as uncertain by many of the most conservative scholars. Very probably it was earlier.

Place.—The ark rested on some height in the mountainous region of Ararat, south of Armenia, in the region of the upper Euphrates. The ark started further down.

Place in the History.—At least 1656 years after Adam. A considerable population in the world, quite well advanced in the arts of civilization. The world grown wicked; but a line of good men running through it.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Decisive Choice,—
the Way of Salvation, or the Way
of Ruin.

- I. THE LITERARY FORM OF THE NARRATIVE.
- II. THE DUAL LINES OF PROGRESS.
- III. THE CRISIS OF THE RACE.
- IV. THE PROBLEM OF THE AGES—TO GET RID OF WICKEDNESS.
- V. THE PROBLEM SOLVED—THE DELUGE AND THE ARK.
- VI. THE BEGINNINGS OF A NEW ERA (vs. 1-16).

The new start. Worship. A danger averted. The covenant and promise.

I. The Literary Form of the Narrative.—FIRST. The narrative as it stands to-day in our Bibles is one straightforward, harmonious narrative, telling the story in the simple language of the early days. There are repetitions, but no contradictions, as put together by the latest editor.

SECOND. But by a careful analysis, putting the repetitions into separate accounts, there are made to appear two different stories interwoven together. This separation is made by the higher critics, in a way generally agreed upon among them, and any one can easily see in the narrative as it stands, a number of things which suggest such a compilation.

The verses are separated by different kinds of type in Lenormant's *Beginnings of History*. In Kent's *Beginnings of Hebrew History*, the two separated stories are printed side by side. In Bacon's *Genesis of Genesis*, each story is printed by itself in different kinds of type. In Bissell's *Genesis Printed in Colors*, each story is distinguished by its own colors. If one will mark on the margin of his Bible the following verses with a blue pencil for the *Jehovistic or Prophetic story*, and the remaining verses with a red pencil for the *Elohistic or Priestly story*, he can read easily the supposed two accounts. Mark with blue Gen. 6: 1-8; 7: 1-5, 7-10, 12, last part of 16, last part of 17, 22, 23; 8: last part of 2, and first of 3, 6-12, last part of 13, 20-22; 9: 18-27.

Thus read in two stories, there is considerable variation and contradiction, especially in relation to the numbers of animals brought into the ark, in one only by twos, in the other also by sevens; and as to the duration of the flood, according to one 365 days, in the other 101 days. In this way the story of the flood appears to be mere traditions, and not true history.

THIRD. But this last conclusion will not bear examination. For (1) in order to reach it one must assume as a fact, what is neither proved nor probable, that the part selected from each story is the whole of the story. The rest of each story put with it, might easily make the two stories agree. It is the custom of compilers to select only such portions as best correspond to this purpose.

(2) The only ancient example of such interweaving of two stories as is claimed for the narrative of the flood, is the Diatessaron of Tatian, who wove together the four Gospels into one continuous story of the Life of Christ (called a diatessaron, or "one made out of four") in the latter half of the second century of our Christian era. This is the one always presented to me when I have sought some example which can be tested. In studying it, I soon found that Tatian took the second temptation from the Matthew story, and the third from Luke's story, with the exception of one sentence. On the principles by which the deluge stories are separated, they evidently refer to the same temptation, for both show Jesus on some height; in both he is tempted; in both Jesus gains the victory by a passage of Scripture; but in that case the separate stories are contradictory; in one the height is a pinnacle, and the other a mountain, etc. There must have been only two temptations. As a matter of fact, having the original separate stories, we know that the Redactor Tatian quoted only a part of each story, that both Matthew and Luke tell us about all three temptations, and when we see the whole of each story which Tatian combined into one, there is no contradiction whatever.

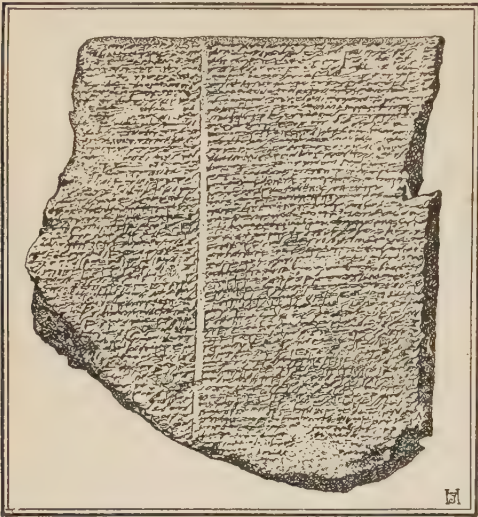
There is nothing by which the combined story in Genesis can be tested as to its original sources, but it is impossible to know that each story did not contain the statements given in the other, and that the separate stories as a whole were not as harmonious as the combined one given in the Bible as it stands. "As for the alleged contradictions, they do not exist," says Prof. Willis J. Beecher. "The statement that all the animals went in by pairs is entirely consistent with the statement that some of them went in by sevens. There is plenty of room for the forties of days and the sevens of days within the fuller numbers that are given." The contradictions are the creations of those who not only see two narratives, but take for granted that each one is the whole.

(3) The Babylonian traditions of the deluge, which many critics regard as the source of the Bible account, contain the combined narrative, in which some of the peculiarities of each one are given.

(4) There are almost universal traditions of a flood with great similarity of details. The most important of these is the Chaldean account, written on clay tablets found among the ruins of Nineveh, and now in the British Museum. "The account of the deluge is a universal tradition in all branches of the human family, with the sole exception of the black race. And a tradition everywhere so exact and so concordant cannot possibly be referred to an imaginary myth. . . . It must necessarily be the reminiscence of an actual and terrible event . . . near to the primitive cradle of mankind, and previous to the separation of the families from whom the principal races were to descend." — *Lenormant*.

(5) There is nothing in geology to discredit the story of the deluge, but much to confirm the fact, when the extent and the date and the particulars of the story are not in question.

FOURTH. The inspired Scriptures which we love and teach are not the early documents included in them, but the Scriptures themselves as given to us by the inspired writers. "It is in their present form, therefore, that the Scriptures possess their character as the sacred books of Israel and of Christianity. In most cases we have no means of telling what religious value was attributed to the sources as existing in earlier



From a Fragment of a Baked Clay Tablet, Inscribed with the Babylonian Account of the Deluge.
N. NEVEH GALLERY BRITISH MUSEUM.

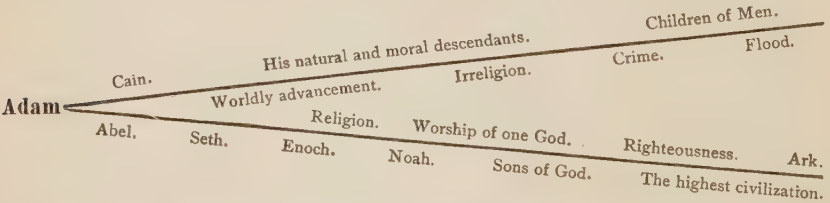
forms. Whatever inspiration one holds that they have, must be predicated of the Scriptures rather than of the sources.

"It is the Scriptures in their present form that have won their way to universal acceptance as a great literature. . . . The literary excellence of the passage is due, supposing the analysis to be correct, to the authors who put the Scriptures into their present form rather than to the earlier writers whose works they used. Whether the analyses are correct or not these final authors did literary work which still commands the attention of mankind. And our Scriptures are the writings as they left them, not as they found them. It is the Scriptures, and not certain supposed earlier writings, that claim our chief interest."—*Willis J. Beecher, D.D., in The Westminster Teacher.*

II. The Dual Lines of Progress of the Early World.—THE SONS OF GOD AND THE CHILDREN OF MEN. We notice in the first verses of chapter 6, many centuries

after the beginning of the human race, two expressions, "sons of God," and "daughters of men," which show into what two great classes the race of man had become clearly distinguished and confirmed. "The picture of Cain and Abel portrays how, from the first, opposition has subsisted between good and evil, between faith and self-will, between obedience and lawlessness. The two brothers became the types, the one of sin, the other of righteousness."—*Ryle, Early Narratives.* These two lines and types have continued not only through the entire Bible history, but to this day.

THE SONS OF GOD (Gen. 6: 2). These are evidently those who worshiped the one God in distinction from those who forsook him both in worship and in character. The use of "son" for "disciple," or "worshiper," is common in Scripture. Thus, "the sons of the prophets." The Jews are often called "the sons of God" (Isa. 1: 2; 43: 6; Jer. 3: 14, 19; Hos. 1: 10), and frequently in the New Testament. The same phrase may be applied to the worshiper of God in heaven, as in Job 1: 6; 2: 1; 38: 7. The title is one that applies to worshipers of God anywhere. Hence, there is no reason for assuming, as some do, that "sons of God" here *must* refer to angels, thus relegating the statement to pure myth, while in their references to Scripture they ignore the number of times when God's people on earth are characterized as his sons and children.



This line is not coextensive with the descendants of Seth, though most of the worshipers of God were in that line. Here and there we find examples of these worshipers to show that the godly race was not extinct. The brief biography of Enoch is like a fountain in a desert. He "walked with God and was not, for God took him." "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death" (Heb. 11: 5). He was a living witness for God

in a wicked generation, a continual example of what men should be, a walking sermon on righteousness and religion.

" He climbed Love's ladder so high,
From the round at the top he stepped to the sky."

Later on Noah emerges into the light of history, and we study him to-day. These were great heroes, "good men in bad times," far more heroic than the giants, the fierce chiefs, in the line of Cain.

NOTE how piety was tested in those days, as Job's was later; how overcoming the world made mighty men of God; how these men were like lighthouses in a stormy sea.

" Like some tall mount that lifts its awful form,
Swells from the vale and midway leaves the storm;
Though round its base the rolling clouds are spread,
Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

THE CHILDREN OF MEN. It is noticeable that in the line of Cain were the first builders of cities, the roving bands which lived in movable tents, in pastures for cattle, the inventors of musical instruments, and the workers in brass and iron. The great body of men became worldly and wicked idolaters, whether in the line of Cain or of Seth.

One reason for the increasing wickedness was the intermarriage of the "sons of God" with the "daughters of men." Those who had been brought up religiously fell away, being attracted by the beauty of the "daughters of men." The natural result was (1) an increase of irreligion. "Instead of the ungodly rising to the level of the godly he sinks to hers." Compare the case of Ahab and Jezebel. (2) "From this union sprang a race of *Nephilim*, giants, athletes, bullies, or men of violence, who became *Gibborim*, heroes, or famous men in war and arts, fierce and remorseless chiefs, who, in their wild ambition, filled the world with blood and tumult, and all the excesses of unbridled depravity, till it was clear that wickedness would very soon make a conquest of the whole race of man in perpetuity. They may have been of gigantic size, like those to whom the same name is afterwards applied in Palestine, but it is not necessarily implied." — *Geikie*. "Dr. Franz Boaz, of the United States Department of Ethnology, has carefully inquired into the results of the intermixture of European and aboriginal races in America. He shows that the half-bloods exhibit a marked increase in stature and physical power, especially in the men." — *Popular Science Monthly*, October, 1894.

NOTE. I quote a half-truth from Professor Dods in order to add the other half. "Always there have been those who believed in God's love and waited for it, and those who believed more in their own force and energy. . . . And this story of Cain and Abel and the succeeding generations does not conceal the fact that for the purposes of this world there has been visible an element of weakness in the godly line, and that it is to the self-reliant and God-defying energy of the descendants of Cain that we owe much of the external civilization of the world. While the descendants of Seth pass away and leave only this record, that they 'walked with God,' there are found among Cain's descendants, builders of cities, inventors of tools and weapons, music and poetry, and the beginnings of culture."

This has frequently been true temporarily, both of individuals and of nations, but only temporarily and partially. Cain's line culminated in the flood. The line of Abel morally, and of Seth directly, accomplished a thousand times more in civilization and worldly progress than the line of Cain. The highest results of civilization have always grown most luxuriously in the lines of piety and righteousness. But it is not in the direction of great conquerors, or immense riches, or in the magnificence of the few.

III. The Crisis of the Race. — We are told in chapter 6 the depth of moral corruption into which the majority of the race had fallen. "The earth was filled with violence. . . . And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually."

IV. The Problem of the Ages, — What to Do with Wicked Men. — This has been the problem of every human government, from the heads of a family to emperors and autocrats. It forms the most difficult problem to-day, and it is well to study God's method in these early ages.

FIRST. He let the people work out the problem for centuries with the ordinary blessed influences of his teaching and his Spirit (for the statement that his "Spirit would not always strive" implies that he had been striving).

The result was that there was danger that the whole population would be destroyed by

their own violence and vice, and become a hell during the period it endured. This would be an acknowledged failure.

SECOND. Let us note the various means, old and new, universal and special, to stem the tide of evil and save the race from sin and destruction.

1. The influence of the good part of the race, "the children of God" (Gen. 4: 26).
2. God gave long individual lives, so that the Word of God communicated to the early race might not be lost, and all the warnings and instructions of the past might be an influence for good; but they used their long lives to grow strong and hardened in wickedness.
3. God allowed more than sixteen centuries for the experiment, for opportunity for the race to reform; but they grew worse and worse.
4. God sent his Spirit to strive with men; but they resisted his blessed influences (Gen. 6: 3).
5. He gave them a long warning of the coming danger (Gen. 6: 3).

6. He sent Noah to preach righteousness to the world, by both precept and example (Heb. 11: 7; 2 Pet. 2: 5). The ark would be both text and sermon, "every stroke upon the ark being a real sermon (as Nazianzen hath it) to forewarn them to flee from the wrath to come." It was a sermon a century long.

7. Note that in the record are signs that the people had a false ideal, "and the germ cell of a man's character is his ideal, his answer to the question, 'What makes life worth living?' Cain, who killed his brother, had become the world's ideal, the hero, the man of renown. We hear one of his descendants called Cainan, another Tubal-Cain, and the striking feature of Lamech's Song of the Sword (Gen. 4: 23, 24) is inspired by the memory of Cain." — *Condensed from Matheson.*

God in answer raised up another kind of Hero, a Hero-preacher of righteousness. The aim of Noah was to avert the flood, not bring it, as Jonah was bidden to avert Nineveh's ruin, not to destroy the city; and as the prophets preached to prevent the exile, not to bring it. But all in vain. We are reminded of Christ's tears over Jerusalem.

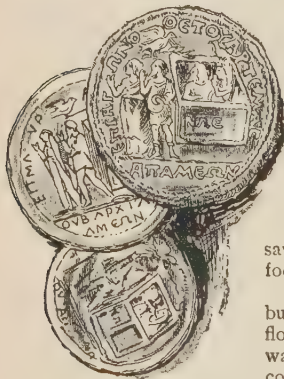
THIRD. God could destroy the wicked by some act which would be a perpetual warning, and preserving the good could start the race afresh, without its overwhelming evil environment, with a past experience of good and evil behind it, and with hope, through a long discipline and many failures, of becoming the kingdom of God to his praise and glory through all ages and all worlds.

V. **The Problem Solved. The Ark and the Deluge.** — NOAH was the great grandson of Enoch, and like him walked with God. He was a holy, virtuous, pious man, in a world ruining itself with wickedness. His was not merely a passive goodness. He was a preacher of righteousness (2 Pet. 2: 5). He was a Prophet and Reformer. It is not probable that he was popular with men, but he was in favor with God. His name means *Rest*, a quiet man, a man of peace, but a man of power, a rock in a wild rushing stream, a perennial fountain in a desert. "Josephus supplements Moses and Second Peter, and tells us that Noah preached and pleaded with them to change their dispositions and their actions till he was afraid they would kill him. . . .

Noah did not discredit his preaching by his life. My father's tutor, says the author of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, believed all that he professed, and practiced all that he enjoined." — *Alexander Whyte, Bible Characters.*

ILLUSTRATION. Picture out the opposition to Noah, the ridicule and unbelief during the building of the ark. Perhaps at the first storm the people were somewhat afraid, and thought of repentance; but as shower after shower passed, they would soon imagine that the flood would never come. They would ridicule Noah as they saw him working on the huge ark, year after year. What a fool he must have seemed to them.

THE ARK was not a ship, meant to sail, but a long, oblong building meant to float with the tides, "a covered raft, or floating house." — *Green.* "It seems that the expression was used in Egypt for a boat like a mummy-case or a sarcophagus, and hence, probably, for an ordinary Nile boat, thus modifying the idea of the ark being necessarily a mere square chest." — *Geikie.* "Philo remarks that the measurements of the ark were the magnified measurements of a man



From a Bronze Medal with Impression of the Ark. Struck at Apamea, in Phrygia.

lying down, who is ten times longer than he is high, and six times longer than he is broad." — *Delitzsch*. The dimensions given, compared with our large modern ships, are

	LENGTH.	WIDTH.	HEIGHT.
The ark,	300 cubits, 450 feet.	50 cubits, 75 feet.	30 cubits, 45 feet.
<i>Wilhelm der Grosse</i> ,	648 feet.	65 feet.	43 feet.
The <i>Great Eastern</i> was	680 feet.	82.5 feet.	58 feet.

Modern vessels, being built for swift sailing, are much longer in proportion to their width than was the ark.

The ark was of three stories, built of gopher wood, probably cypress, a resinous fir. It was made water-tight by covering it with bitumen which abounded in that region, as well as around the Dead Sea. Around it, close to the roof for safety, an opening for light and ventilation, one cubit in height, ran around the four sides, interrupted by the beams or posts supporting the roof. So *Mitchell* and *nearly all*. Compare the floating of the immense dry dock for the largest warships from America to the Philippines, 1905, 1906.

Rooms, literally "nests" or "cells," were made in three tiers for the accommodation of the animals. They would strengthen the whole structure. There was a single door.

ILLUSTRATION. "In the beginning of the seventeenth century, says *J. D. Michaelis*, a ship was built with a rounded hull, after the proportions given in Genesis 6, and it was found, to the astonishment



Noah Building the Ark.

In the Vatican, Raphael's Loggie. From a Photograph.

of all, that these proportions, given in the oldest book in the world, were precisely the most advantageous for safety and for stowage. Peter Jansen, a Mennonist who lived at Hoorn, in North Holland, was its builder, and his ark differed from Noah's only in size. When launched it proved to be able to bear a third more freight than other ships of the same measurement. The Dutch at once built others like it, calling them Noah's Arks, and they ceased to be used only because they could not carry cannon." — *Geikie*.

THE INMATES were Noah, his wife, their three sons and their wives, — eight persons in all. The animals of the region were brought into the ark. "The method of speaking of the animals that were taken into the ark, 'clean and unclean,' implies that chiefly those which were useful to man were preserved, and that no wild animals (carnivora) were taken into the ark; so that there is no difficulty from the great number of different species of animal life existing in the world." — *Cook*. The region whence they came was doubtless restricted.

THE DELUGE. It is the opinion of almost all, even the most conservative, that the deluge was limited in extent. "Earth" is frequently used where it must mean "the land," "the region" where man existed.

When the account says that "all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered" by the waters of the flood, and that "every living substance was destroyed," "a reasonable interpretation in accordance with our known knowledge of the frequent use of language in literature," often exemplified in the Bible itself, would regard it as from the standpoint of the observer and of his knowledge, and not necessarily imply that the total earth was covered, but only the regions known to man and inhabited by man. Thus when our Saviour says that the Queen of Sheba "came from the uttermost parts of the earth," and the Acts reports that in Jerusalem at Pentecost were people "out of every nation under heaven," they would not be proved untruthful nor even inexact, if land should be found farther away than Sheba, or a tribe that was not represented at Pentecost.

1. And God ¹ remembered Nō'ah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that ^{was} ^{were} with him in the ark: ² and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters ^{assuaged;} ^{assuaged;}

2. ³ The ^{the} fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and ⁴ the rain from heaven was restrained;

3. And ^{and} the waters returned from off the earth ^a continually: and after the end ⁵ of the ^{an} hundred and fifty days the waters ^{were abated.} ^{decreased.}

4. And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ar'ā-rat.

5. And the waters ^b decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth ^{month,} ^{month,} on the first ^{day} ^{day} of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen.

6. And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Nō'ah opened ⁶ the window of the ark which he had made:

7. And ^{and} he sent forth a raven, ^{which} ^{and it} went forth ^c to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth.

8. ^{Also} ^{And} he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground;

9. But ^{but} the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him ^{into} ^{to} the ark, for the waters ^{were} ^{were} on the face of the whole earth: ^{then} ^{and} he put forth his hand, and took her, and ^{pulled} ^{brought} her in unto him into the ark.

10. And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark;

11. And ^{and} the dove came in to him ^{in the evening;} ^{at eventide;} and, lo, in her mouth ^{was} an olive leaf pluckt off: so Nō'ah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth.

12. And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; ^{which} ^{and she} returned not again unto him any more.

¹ Gen. 19: 29; Ex. 2: 24; 1 Sam. 1: 19.

² Ex. 14: 21.

³ Gen. 7: 11.

⁴ Job 38: 37.

⁵ Gen. 7: 24.

⁶ Gen. 6: 16.

^a Hebrew, *in going and returning.*

^b Hebrew, *were in going and decreasing.*

^c Hebrew, *in going forth and returning.*

In the account as the sacred historian has left it, the rain continued 40 days, but the waters coming on to the land probably by its subsidence, from the great deep, continued to increase for 150 days, then for another 150 days the waters abated, so that hills were seen, but it was 65 days more, making one whole year, before Noah and his family disembarked.

VI. The Beginning of the New Era. — Vs. 1-16. 1. God remembered Noah. He never forgets his people.

2. Fountains . . . of the deep . . . rain from heaven. The two sources of the deluge.

4. Ark rested in the seventh month. There were two starting points of the year, — the Sacred in April, the Civil in September. The seventh month was either May or October.

5. Tenth month. July or January.

7. Sent forth a raven, which would feed on floating dead bodies, and return to the ark, back and forth. Hence, its return would be no test of the state of the land.

8. Sent forth a dove to get information. The dove returned with none.

11. In her mouth was an olive leaf. One that had just put forth fresh leaves. "That the olive tree is found in Armenia is proved from Strabo." — Dillmann.

13. In the six hundredth and first year. Twelve lunar months after Noah entered the ark.

14. In the second month, etc. Making in all 365 days.

16. Go forth. The work was complete. The old was ended and the new race begun. The world entered upon a new era.

13. And it came to pass in the six ^{hundredth} ~~hundred~~ and first year, in the first ^{month,} ~~the first~~ ^{day} ~~day~~ of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Nō'ah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was ^{dry.} ~~dried.~~

14. And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth ^{dried.} ~~dry.~~

15. And God spake unto Nō'ah, saying,

16. Go forth of the ark, ¹ thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

¹ Gen. 7: 13

FIRST. WORSHIP (Gen. 8: 20-22). The first act of Noah was an act of worship and religion. He expressed his gratitude, his faith, his consciousness of sin, and the infinite love of God which had saved him.

True religion must ever lie at the basis of the progress of man. He instituted that which would save the race from growing so wicked as to require another flood, and which slowly working and unfolding in meaning through the ages, would effect the perfect redemption of man, even though "the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."

SECOND. A GREAT DANGER WAS AVERTED (Gen. 9: 1-6). When God promised that there should be never again a destruction of the race, there was great danger that any man might interpret it that no matter what violence he did to others he could live on unpunished, and thus the world could easily perish by a flood of violence, even if it escaped a flood of waters. Instead of the destruction of the race the individual murderer was condemned to death, righteously, for our pity should be more for the multitude of the innocent, who otherwise would suffer, than for the justly punished murderer. The mock humanity that gives flowers to the murderer, but a grave to his victim, is no sign that divine love to man is increasing.

ILLUSTRATION. In the *Lost Tales of Miletus*, "Death and Sisyphus," Death is represented as made fast in Sisyphus' debtor's chair, and hence unable to touch mankind. Then "not a single voice from man arose." "Mortals live like brutes who never say a prayer." "Red lightnings wrapt the felon plundering shrines. 'Blaze on,' the felon said, 'ye can't kill.'"

THIRD. A DIVINE PROMISE IN THE HEAVENS (Gen. 9: 8-17). God averted another fear that the deluge might be repeated; a fear which would haunt the early race at every coming of the fruit-giving rain, a fear that would interfere not only with comfort, but with progress.

In confirmation of this promise God set his rainbow in the cloud. It was not its first appearance, but was probably a familiar sight. But he constituted it the sign of his covenant, "visible to all nations, and intelligible to all minds, just as afterwards the familiar rite of baptism and the customary use of bread and wine were by our blessed Lord ordained to be the tokens and pledges of the new covenant in Christ between his heavenly Father and every Christian soul." — *Student's Commentary*. "It is incomparably more comforting and inspiring to recognize the fact that an occurrence with which Noah was already familiar was made the pledge of the divine promise, than that a new phenomenon was introduced into the processes of nature." — *Professor Denio*.

THE RAINBOW TOKEN. "That gracious thing made up of tears and light." — *Cole-ridge*. The rainbow as a sign of God's promise is peculiarly appropriate and beautiful. (1) It is formed on the rain itself, the rain which produced the flood. (2) "After the appearance of an entire rainbow, as a rule, no rain of long duration follows." Indeed, the rainbow is a proof that the storm is partial, not covering the whole sky. The sun of God's mercy is shining on the rain. (3) The darker the storm, the brighter the rainbow. (4) "As it lights up the dark ground that just before was discharging itself in flashes of lightning, it gives us an idea of the victory of God's love over the black and fiery wrath." — *Delitzsch*. (5) "It is just in its conformity to natural law that the rainbow is a pledge that the order of nature shall continue." — *Denio*. (6) It can be seen everywhere in all parts of the earth; it is all embracing. It shines on the evil and on the good, with its rays of warning and of hope. (7) It is very beautiful and attractive. God gives a winning beauty to his angels, to his messengers of mercy, and to his promises, in order to attract

men and show his love. (8) It forms an arch, wide as the storm, and binding earth and heaven, God and man, together in peace. There can be no rainbow without the sun.

"Yet clouds will intervene,
And all my prospect flies,
Like Noah's dove I flit between
Rough seas and stormy skies.

"Anon the clouds depart,
The winds and waters cease,
While sweetly o'er my gladdened heart
Expands the bow of peace."
— *Montgomery.*

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. God bears with men till they refuse good, and choose the evil in spite of all good influences he can bring to bear upon them. Compare Sodom, and the warnings in Deut. 28. The fire-bell does not create fire.

"God made the living soul;
The ruined creature is the work of man."

2. God punishes men not because he hates them, but because he loves them. Sin is a far greater evil than punishment. The flood that destroyed most of the people was the real salvation of the human race. God warned and entreated the people to repent, by his Holy Spirit, by the preaching of a good man, and by his living example.

"The story of the deluge is the story of a great cleansing. A taking away of men, that man upon the earth might make a new beginning." No philosophic historian ignores the function of great crises in lifting the world to new planes of life and thought. "The fire in London was a blessing," says Lord Macaulay. "It burned down the city, but it burned out the plague."

3. "This flood is occurring every day; this judgment upon sin never ceases; this protection of a righteous seed is an eternal fact! How long shall we live in the mere letter, and have only a history instead of a revelation, — a memorandum book instead of a living Father? . . . If you were to-day to destroy all the world, with the single exception of one household, and that household the most pious and honorable that ever lived, in less than half a century we should see all the bad characteristics returning. Water cannot drown sin. Fire cannot burn out sin. Prisons cannot cure theft and cruelty. We must go deeper." — *Professor Dods.*

4. The ark of God's salvation is large enough for all who will enter. The door is open. God's invitations are sent to all.

5. Men may help build the ark, and yet not themselves enter into it and be saved. A minister once said to the unconverted librarian of his Sunday school, "What became of Noah's carpenters?" The young man was surprised, and did not at once perceive the purpose of the question; but, after a week's thinking, gave his heart to Christ.

6. God's covenant and the Promise Sign are for to-day.

"Oh, ye who weep for sorrow's sake,
Dread not the coming years;
Doubt not that God's sunshine shall make
A rainbow of your tears!" — *Edwin L. Sabin.*

LESSON VI. — February 10.

ABRAM CALLED TO BE A BLESSING.

Genesis 12: 1-8.

READ Genesis 10-12. COMMIT vs. 1-3.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing.* — GEN. 12: 2.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON

ON ABRAHAM AND HIS LIFE.

Before looking up the passages below, it is best to read the whole story of Abraham as given in Genesis.

Note down all the points you find. Note also all that suggests the combination or interweaving of different sources of the history.

1. **His Ancestry:** Genesis 11 and Luke 3: 34-38.
2. **His Birthplace:** Gen. 11: 28-31.
3. **His Marriage:** Gen. 11: 29; 1 Pet. 3: 6; Gen. 16: 3; 25: 1.
4. **His Children:** Gen. 16: 15; 21: 3; 25: 2.
5. **His Prosperity:** Gen. 13: 2; 24: 35.
6. **Journeys:** Gen. 11: 31; Neh. 9: 7; Gen. 12: 1-9; Josh. 24: 3; Isa. 51: 2; Gen. 12: 10; 20: 1.
7. **Names of Places.** Find how many places are connected with Abram.

8. **Religion of His Ancestors:** Josh. 24: 2.
9. **Deeds:** Gen. 11: 31; 13: 8, 9; 14: 13-20; Heb. 7: 1-10; Gen. 18: 21; 14: 21; 33, 34; 22: 1-14; 12: 7, 8; 13: 4.
10. **Visions and Promises:** Gen. 12: 1-3; 13: 14-17; 15: 1-18; 17: 1-8; 21: 12, 13.
11. **Faith and Character:** Gen. 18: 19; 22: 12; 26: 5; Neh. 9: 7, 8; Psa. 105: 6; Rom. 4: 11; Gal. 3: 6-9; Heb. 11: 8-19; Jas. 2: 21-24; 2 Chron. 20: 7; Isa. 41: 8.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

The Oracle at Delphi said: If the Athenians desire good citizens, let them put whatever is most beautiful in the ears of their sons. So they put in their ears golden earrings.

But Pericles said that the Oracle meant jewels of thought set in golden words.

We have in this lesson the story of one of the grandest men that ever lived to put in the ears of our scholars.

One of the best ways of teaching this lesson is to place it beside Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, so familiar to all children, and make it the medium of connecting the teaching of Abraham's journey with their duty and privilege.

Use the map freely, and connect closely with the modern routes of travel, scenes, and cities, so as to make the man and his journey real.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 1-3; Heb. 11: 8, 10; Gal. 3: 9.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"For all the saints who from their labors rest."
"I'm a pilgrim and I'm a stranger."

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

The choice of God and his kingdom now.
Trust in God by doing hard duties.

CHRONOLOGICAL CHIMES.

Contemporary with Abraham 2000-1825

B. C.

Hammurabi (Amraphel of Genesis 14), the famous king of Babylonia, 2300-2000.

In Egypt, the 12th dynasty, 2000-1788 B. C., including the famous Sesostri family.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — Abraham was born about 2000 B. C. Ussher's date (in margin of our Bibles), 1996, is not far from right. So Hommel. He was probably contemporary with Hammurabi, whose date is put variously at 2300, 2200, and 2000 B. C.

Place. — Abraham originated in Ur of the Chaldees, the ruins of which, called Mugheir, are now being excavated. It is near the Euphrates, 120 miles from the Persian Gulf.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Story of an Ancient Pilgrim's Progress.

Introduction. The connecting links of the history.

I. ABRAHAM THE HERO OF FAITH.

Birth, marriage, education, position.

II. ABRAHAM'S ENVIRONMENT.

Worldliness, idolatry, immorality.
Legends. The City of Destruction.

III. ABRAHAM'S CALL TO A NEW LIFE (v. 1).

The call. How he was called. Called to what?

IV. VISIONS AND PROMISES.

Seven great promises and ideals.

V. THE PILGRIMAGE OF THE PROMISED LAND (vs. 4-8).

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Early history of Abraham.

Why he was called.

What was the advantage of his emigrating?

How Abraham's faith trained.

How were all the families of the earth blessed in him?

What is said of him in Hebrews 11?

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

For Egypt and Babylonia in the time of Abraham, see Hommel's *Ancient Hebrew Tradition, as Illustrated by the Monuments*. Rogers' *History of Babylonia and Assyria*. Breasted's *History of Egypt*. Pinches' *Old Testament in the Light of the Historical Records of Assyria and Babylonia*. The *Code of Hammurabi*, Harper, also by Cook. Professor Price's *Monuments of the Old Testament*. Kent's *Beginnings of Hebrew History*. *Bible Characters*, by Whyte.

Representative Men of the Bible, by Mathe-son. *Women of the Old Testament*, by Horton. *Women of the Bible. Famous Men of the Old Testament*, Wharton.

REFERENCES IN LITERATURE.

Trench's *Poems*. *The Conversion of Abraham*. Lowell's *Present Crisis*, "We two must Pilgrims be." Francis Quarles' *Divine Fancies*.

INTRODUCTION. The real, essential, enduring progress of the world is moral, spiritual, religious. This is progress worth recording in the Book of God. In this progress Abraham stands out as a lighthouse landmark, lighted by God, and shining down all the ages. He is the third of the representatives of eras in the history: Adam—Noah—Abraham. With his history begins the second book of Genesis. Thirteen chapters are devoted to his story. Of the natural divisions (*toledoth*, "generations") or chapters of Genesis, the story of Abraham (Gen. 12: 1—25: 11) is the eighth.

THE WORLD WAS POPULATED IN THREE DIFFERENT LINES by the three sons of Noah: Shem, from whom were derived the Jews and other Semitic races; Ham, the ancestor of the colored race; and Japheth, among whose descendants are the European nations. To these three the diverse races and the languages of men converge, as rays of light to their source.

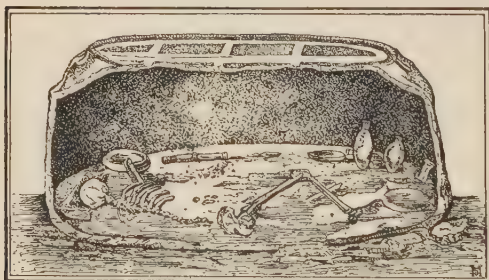
THE DISPERSION. It was only a short time after Noah that the people began to scatter in various directions, and were thus enabled to work out the problems of government and civilization in many independent ways. The best progress is made in this way in almost every department of life. The diversities of language fenced off one nation from another, not only as a limitation of the power of violence, but as a barrier that would make the isolation more perfect for the experiments. It made a fence and defence around Abraham and his new religious development.

There are now in the world more than a thousand languages, "each of them unintelligible to the speakers of any other" (*Century Dic.*), besides more than two thousand dialects of various degrees. As the world grows better, the need of various languages diminishes, and the tendency is to return to one language when all men become brothers. Pentecost is the reversal of Babel. See the progress toward unity of language by comparing Gen. 11: 1-9 with Acts 2: 1-12 and Rev. 7: 9, 10.

I. Abraham, — Great Heart; Hero of Faith. — HIS NAME was first *Abram*, "Exalted father," and changed later in a vision from God to *Abraham*, "Father of a multitude." The derivation of the name is unknown. Professor Sayce says that the name *Abram* (*Abu-ramu*, "the exalted father") is found on early Babylonian contract tablets.

HIS ANCESTRY. He was of the line of Shem, the tenth generation from Noah, if his ancestral list contains all the names, and not a selection of the chief men, as frequently occurs even in the Bible genealogical lists. His father's name was Terah.

HIS BIRTHPLACE AND EARLY HOME was Ur of the Chaldees, which, at that time, was probably on the Persian Gulf, although now about 120 miles inland. The city was a great maritime emporium, a walled town, with a high civilization and a large commerce; situated in "a marvelously rich country, said to be the original home of the wheat-plant, and famous for its dates and other fruits." — *R. Payne Smith*. Here



Interior of Ancient Tomb Found at Mugheir, the Skeleton Head Resting on a Reed Mat.

he remained till he was 70 years old.

HIS MARRIAGE. While still at Ur he was married to his half-sister (Gen. 20: 12), Sarah, "Princess," a very beautiful woman, fascinating and somewhat imperious; queenly in stature, but "wielding a

scepter, by the magic of which she could lord it over men's hearts," while Abraham had the majestic strength of gentleness and patient forbearance. Undoubtedly Sarah sympathized with the religious life of her husband and father. He had one child by her, Isaac, and another, Ishmael, by a second wife.

HIS PROSPERITY. How much property Abraham possessed in Ur, and had to leave when he obeyed God's call, we do not know, but after reaching Palestine he became a great landed chief, with large possessions of live stock and of land, and a retinue so large that he could muster 318 fighting men when he went forth to rescue Lot.

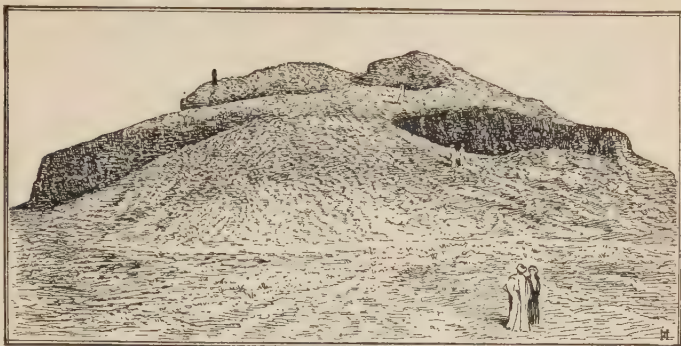
HIS EDUCATION. We must remember that Abraham lived in the time of two old and great civilizations, of Egypt and of Palestine, and in the very center of one of them. Fragments of household papers and business documents of the twenty-sixth century, B. C., 600 years before Abraham, have been found in Egypt (*Breasted*, p. 98). In December, 1901, and January, 1902, there was discovered on the Acropolis of Susa (the Biblical Shushan of Esther) a monument of black diorite, nearly eight feet high, on which was engraved by Hammurabi, a mighty king of Babylonia in Abraham's time, a code of laws which remind us of the Levitical codes of the Pentateuch. So that writing was familiar in Abraham's day, and doubtless he had written records of the past. "Hammurabi's capital became a home of scholars whose influence was far-reaching. Indeed, we may call Hammurabi's reign the Augustan age of Babylonian literature." Of course he was educated also in the religion and history of his ancestors. Tablets containing a part of the deluge stories have been found in Ur, and it is hoped to find there the Babylonian library containing the original tablets from which the stories of Creation and of the Flood were copied for the library at Nineveh. From the corners of the second story of the temple found at Ur Taylor "took the long inscriptions of king Nabonidus, which speak of the crown prince, the Biblical Belshazzar, whom the scholars of fifty years ago called a legendary character."

There were still good influences and religious people. Noah lived till within two years of Abraham's birth. We find Melchizedek later in his history; and the impression given in the history is that there was a real religious life there, however overshadowed by idolatry and worldliness.

II. Abraham's Early Environment. The City of Destruction.

FIRST. A WORLDLY ATMOSPHERE. Long before Abraham left Ur was "a great city, the political and religious center of the greatest empire of the Orient." "Twice, at least, it was the capital of the Roman Empire." "Its inscriptions speak of at least five temples, of which the ruins of one remain." In "its mounds have been found engraved seal cylinders, copper and clay dishes, water jars and drinking cups, gold, silver, and agate beads, copper bangles, rings, bracelets, precious stones and weapons." — *Report of Dr. Edgar J. Banks, one of the excavators.*

SECOND. IDOLATRY. "The city of Ur was not only the capital, it was the holy city of the Chaldeans." "The land of Chaldea was wholly given over to polytheism. There were a dozen or fifteen gods of nearly equal dignity and authority; there were a cloud of lesser deities." The power of idolatry at Ur was like that of Bethel when Amos went there as into a lions' den to bring God's warnings to the nation.



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Mugheir, or Ur of the Chaldees, the Home of Abraham.

1. Now the ¹ LORD had said unto A'brām, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto ^a the land that I will shew thee :

¹ Gen. 15: 7; Acts 7: 3; Heb. 11: 8.

THIRD. IMMORALITY. "The remains make disclosures regarding the worship of the gods, which must shock even those who are familiar with the immoralities frequently fostered by heathen religions." — *Marcus Dods*.

FOURTH. THESE INFLUENCES were so overwhelmingly strong that the little light of the "sons of God," while it might not be blown out, would have little opportunity of shining round the world. There was a work for true religion that could not be done there.

There are legends of Abraham's experiences here which, while only legends, doubtless express the actual state of things. "The 'Book of Jubilees' tells how when a boy he was filled with loathing for the vices by which he was surrounded. When only fourteen he separated himself from his father, refusing to worship idols. . . . One day when his fellow townsmen had gone to visit a shrine, he entered their temple and destroyed seventy-two costly idols. . . . He was thrown into the fire, but God sent Gabriel to cool the flame, as in the case of the Hebrew children." — *Wharton*. According to another legend the flames were extinguished by a fountain which sprang up from beneath, and the wood was changed into blossoming fruit-trees; or, as in another legend, the coals of fire were changed into a bed of roses. See *Hastings' Bib. Dic.*, I. 17; Taylor's *Sayings of the Jewish Fathers*. Compare Gideon and his breaking down the idols of his town (Judg. 6: 21-32). Compare the Greek story of Aristides the Just, who was hated by one of the Athenians because he was tired of hearing him called The Just.

THE CITY OF DESTRUCTION. The outward facts of life are allegories and figures of spiritual facts. According to the book of Hebrews (Heb. 11: 9, 10, 16) Abraham's life had a spiritual meaning deeper than the outward history. The city and environment of his home at Ur was like Bunyan's City of Destruction. Its influences led to spiritual death. It represents the state of irreligion and selfishness and sin, the character and the life from which it is our business to escape.

III. Abraham's Call to a New Life. — V. 1. Now the Lord had said. *Omit* "had," AM. R. The Lord said, first at Ur (Gen. 11: 31), and now again in Haran, where he was at the beginning of this chapter. Terah, Abraham's father, led the first migration from Ur to Haran, nearly six hundred miles northwest up the Euphrates, on the road toward Palestine. The desert prevented them from going directly there. They would pass Babylon, now in ruins, and all the towns on the river now in the Baghdad and Aleppo districts of the present Turkish Empire. At Haran, nearly two thousand years later, the Roman general Crassus was defeated and slain by the Parthians.

Some think that the death of Haran, Abraham's brother, caused the father Terah to turn more fully to his ancestral God, as Mr. Durant was led by the death of his only son to a full consecration to God, and to the building of Wellesley College.

At Haran, in Northern Mesopotamia, on a branch of the Euphrates, the family remained five years. Terah, the father, died there. Then came the call of God to move on farther. Haran was not the best place for developing the true religion and embodying it in a race.

HOW DID THE CALL COME? Stephen says (Acts 7: 2) that the God of glory appeared to him, but still does not say how. It may have been in some visible manifestation, as on other occasions (Gen. 18: 1, 2, 22). It may have been a spiritual revelation to his mind combined with the deepening impression that something must be done for the salvation of men, the longing for a better worship, the consciousness of the hopelessness and degradation of idolatry.

"Mozart says in his letters that whenever he saw a grand mountain or a wonderful piece of scenery, it *said* to him, 'Turn me into music; play me on the organ.'" — *Joseph Parker*. It is not uncommon in great crises to have duty so clearly pointed out that it is as clear and definite as a voice spoken from heaven. History and experience both make it probable that there was a long period of unrest and doubt, and inner conflict, praying, and brooding over duty, like Elijah in the wilderness, and Moses in the deserts of Sinai, like Paul who found it hard to kick against the pricks long before the light shone and the voice spoke on the road to Damascus; like Luther who wrestled long before he heard the voice on Pilate's staircase saying to his soul, "The just shall live by faith."

2. ¹ And I will make of thee a great nation, ² and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; ³ and ^{thou shalt be} ^{be thou} a blessing:

¹ Gen. 17: 6; Deut. 26: 5.

² Gen. 24: 35.

³ Gen. 28: 4; Gal. 3: 14.

"Great truths are greatly won, not found by chance,
Nor waited on the breath of summer dream;
But grasped in the great struggle of the soul." — Bonar.

"Every inmost aspiration is God's angel undefiled;
And in every 'O my Father!' slumbers deep a 'Here, my child.'"
— Dscheladeddin.

FITNESS FOR THE CALL. In various ways Abraham was fitted for this call to a new life and new work. His whole training in the line of the worshippers of the true God; his character and inherited possibilities, for no common man could do what God called him to do; his standing the lesser test by removing from Ur to Haran. Now he was submitted to a severer test for a greater work.

CALLED TO WHAT DUTY? **Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred.** Why must he get away from these influences? Because only in a new country, free from the restraints of old customs and old friends, could the family and religion of Abraham best develop. Many an advance can be made in a new country which would fail in an old. Emigrants often do better than at home. The new regions can work out experiments with a free hand. So it was with our Pilgrim Fathers, and they were but one example of what is going on all over the world. Many a boy has been made by leaving home, provided, like Abraham, he can stand the test and conquer temptations and evil influences.

F. B. Meyer well says, "Nothing strengthens us so much as isolation and transplantation. Let a man be put in a responsible position, or thrown on his own resources, and he will develop powers of which there would have been no trace if he had always lived at home, dependent on others and surrounded by luxury. As long as a bird lingers by the nest it will not know the luxury of flight."

Unto a land that I will shew thee. Here was another test of his faith. "Here was a youth who in the enthusiasm of a great cause was willing to be (comparatively) poor. No doubt he is promised large possessions; but these were only promised — they had to be accepted by faith. What had to be accepted as fact was present privation — hardship, weariness, distrust by old friends, coldness from strangers, isolation from the life of all . . . a lonely, thorny path." — *Matheson*.

And the difficulty was greatly enhanced by the fact that he did not know where he was going. He was like a ship sailing from port under sealed orders.

IV. Visions and Promises. — Vs. 2, 3. Abraham had a hard duty before him, but God gave him all that was needed to uphold his faith and strengthen him to obey, while it increased his faith. The wise man needs to see the wisdom of any course of conduct he is to follow. Even Jesus went forward to the cross in view of "the joy that was set before him" (Heb. 12: 2).

The call is followed by seven promises, which were of two kinds: *First*, a lower or temporal blessing which is a right motive in itself, and is a basis and illustration and a means to, *secondly*, the higher, spiritual blessing. But the two are intermingled, and the spiritual could not have come without the temporal, nor the temporal without the spiritual.

NOTE that these visions and promises were repeated eight times, in various forms, to Abraham.

(1) **2. I will make of thee a great nation.** Great and good motives are involved in this promise. Personally it would compensate for the loss of his own country. There is a strong motive in the desire to make one's life tell on the world's good, in the desire to be a perpetual fountain of noble influences, from which flows a stream of blessings down the ages. Such a promise is a strong motive for being right and pure and good; a fountain of waters of life.

This promise was fulfilled in the Hebrew race, which has had a greater religious influence than any other, and which still exists; but more completely in the spiritual sons of Abraham, the whole Christian church (Gal. 3: 29). So Christ says of Abraham, "He rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8: 56).

(2) **And I will bless thee.** No earthly good can be so great as the blessing of God. Others are single, individual good things, but he that has God's blessing has the source of

3. ¹ And ^{and} I will bless them that bless thee, and ^{curse him that curseth thee : him that curseth thee will I curse :} ² and in thee shall all ^{the} families of the earth be blessed.

4. So A'brām ^{departed,} ^{went,} as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lōt went with him: and A'brām ^{was} ^{was} seventy and five years old when he departed out of Hā'ran.

5. And A'brām took Sā'rāi his wife, and Lōt his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and ³ the souls that they had gotten ⁴ in Hā'ran; and they went forth to go into the land of Cā'nān; and into the land of Cā'nān they came.

¹ Gen. 27: 29; Ex. 23: 22.

² Gen. 18: 18; Psa. 72: 17; Acts 3: 25.

³ Gen. 14: 14.

⁴ Gen. 11: 31.

all good; not a cupful of water from the river of life, but the river itself with its ceaseless flow. God himself is the best of all gifts to man.

Even this was not a selfish good, for it was only as he was blessed that he could become a blessing to others. So Paul's experience was what was able "to comfort them that are in any affliction through the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God" (2 Cor. 1: 3-5).

(3) **And make thy name great.** Known, honored, loved through all the centuries, and by multitudes of people. To one who is really worthy of it, it is a great blessing to be the hero, the example, the ideal of many people. Carlyle regards the personal influence of great men as the largest factor in making a people. See his *Heroes and Hero-Worship*. Abraham stands before us as one of the two or three greatest character-making influences in the history of the race.

(4) **And thou shalt be a blessing.** A blessing in thyself, and a source of blessing to others. It is more blessed to give than to receive. "He should be famous, not for what he took from men, but for what he gave to men; not like Sesostris, Cæsar, Alexander, for the victories of the sword, but for the grander victories of truth and love." — *Prof. F. H. Newhall, D.D.*

(5) **3. And I will bless them that bless thee.** Abraham's cause was to be so identified with God's cause that whosoever favored Abraham favored God and his kingdom. So far as we are the true children of God, this is true also of us.

(6) **And curse him that curseth thee.** This is the other side of the same promise. Abraham in character, works, and representative position as the founder of the church was so identified with God that whosoever hated and opposed him hated and opposed God. "The good man is not alone. Touch him, and you touch God."

(7) **In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.** As they have been, by the race he founded, by the spiritual training of that race, by the religious influences and the word of God given through his descendants, and most of all by Jesus Christ, the Messiah, who was of Abraham's seed.

What a vision that was! Others have had visions of better countries, of ideal peoples, — Plato's Republic, the Greek Hesperides, Moore's Utopia, Bacon's New Atlantis, the Spanish Eldorado, but none will begin to compare with the vision and promise given to Abraham, which will be completed only in the New Jerusalem.

We, too, have great and precious promises, in Jesus Christ, of better things and a better country than Abraham had. Great lives are trained by great promises.

The value of ideals. Poem by Mrs. Preston, "The Ideal and the Real." "God never permitted us to form a theory too beautiful for his power to make practical."

V. The Pilgrimage to the Promised Land. — Vs. 4-8. **4. So Abram departed,** with all that he had, (v. 5) **and into the land of Canaan they came.** Canaan — "Lowlands," was originally the low land on the Mediterranean Coast, but afterwards included the whole of Palestine to the Jordan.

TRACE THE JOURNEY on a modern as well as a Biblical map, along the great routes of travel, through Carchemish (in the land of the Hittites, captured by Sargon, B. C. 717; battleground where Pharaoh Necho was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar, B. C. 605), through Hamath (for an interesting story of Hamath, see Peloubet's *Front Line of the Sunday-School Movement*, p. 196; or, *Select Notes*, 1899, p. 252), through the well-known Damascus; crossing the Jordan by one of the great caravan routes, crossing the Jordan either north or south of the Sea of Galilee.

6. And A'brām¹ passed through the land unto the place of ^{Si'chem, She'chem,} ² unto the ^{plain} ^{oak} of Mo'reh. ³ And the Cā'nāan-ite ^{was} ^{was} then in the land.

7. ⁴ And the LORD appeared unto A'brām, and said, ⁵ Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an ⁶ altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

8. And he removed from thence unto ^a ^{the} mountain on the east of Bēth'-el, and pitched his tent, ^{having} ^{having} Bēth'-el on the west, and ^{Ha'i} ^{A'i} on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and ⁶ called upon the name of the LORD.

¹ Heb. 11: 9.² Deut. 11: 30; Judg. 7: 1.³ Gen. 10: 18.⁴ Gen. 17: 1.⁵ Gen. 13: 15; Psal. 105: 9, 11.⁶ Gen. 13: 4.

6. **Sichem.** R. V., "Shechem," near the Mts. Ebal and Gerizim, in Ephraim, afterward the district of Samaria. **Moreh.** A grove near Shechem. **Canaanite.** Descendants of Canaan, the son of Ham, and grandson of Noah.

7. **The Lord appeared unto Abram.** This land was promised to Abraham, but the fact that it was inhabited by a stalwart race at the time was another test and training of Abraham's faith. The Lord appeared to him to encourage and strengthen his faith. "Was this the paradise which had haunted his thoughts as he lay among the hills of Ur watching his flocks under the brilliant midnight sky? No doubt he expected that here all would be easy and bright, peaceful and luxurious." So the Pilgrims, when they first stood on the shores of the new world. So the victors, as they stand on the battlefield. So to Bunyan's Christian, when in the Slough of Despond his companion asks, "Is this the happiness ye have told me all this while of?"

8. **He removed from thence.** Perhaps to be farther away from the heathen Canaanites, and safer in the mountains, where in peace he could worship God and train his family and retainers in the true religion. **Unto . . . Beth-el,** then called Luz, and named Bethel by Jacob, after his vision (Gen. 28: 19). Bethel is about 18 miles south of Shechem, and 12 miles north of Jerusalem. **And Hai on the east.** His encampment was between Bethel and Hai. Hai means *the Ai*. It was five miles east of Bethel and was the scene of the first Israelitish defeat under Joshua (Josh. 7: 2). **And called upon the name of the Lord.** Showing that the sacrifices on the altars were accompanied with prayer. The altars were for both visible and vocal worship.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

Each one of us is called to go on a pilgrimage, like Abraham's, from sin and a worldly life to "a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God"; "a better country, that is a heavenly" (Heb. 11: 10, 16).

This country is the state of holiness and goodness, where the laws and spirit are those of the city of God.

This country is also Heaven, the eternal home of God's children.

Making this pilgrimage is the way by which we can help the whole world to that Promised Land with a picture and promise of which the Bible message closes. By being blessed we can become a blessing. We, ourselves, should live and act as nearly as possible as we would in heaven, for we are to be a part of the kingdom for which we are praying.

"They must upward still, and onward, who would keep abreast of truth;
Lo, before us gleam her camp-fires! we ourselves must pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea,
Nor attempt the Future's portal, with the Past's blood-rusted key."

— Lowell.

We know not at first just where we are going when God calls us from the world to enter into his service. It is always to the land which he will show us. Life and duty and work will unfold themselves to us as we obey the call. "Gradually and slowly our destiny opens before us."

"I know not the way I am going,
But well do I know my Guide."

No one knows beforehand the way in which God will lead him; but he knows that if he obeys blessings will shine upon him all the way, and it will lead to a land overflowing with good things.

No man ever yet, at the beginning, knew all the meaning and possibilities of his life. The child studying his A B C has not even a far-away dream of the wonderful literature spelled out from the alphabet.

John Bunyan, shut up in prison during the twelve best years of his life, while his soul was longing to preach the gospel, and multitudes were starving for want of the bread of life from his lips, could have no conception that by his *Pilgrim's Progress* he should preach to millions instead of thousands, and for centuries instead of years. And so we, shut up in the narrow schoolhouse of life, slowly spelling out the hard words and slowly learning our hard lessons, cannot see the larger spheres and grander living for which we are being fitted even in this life, much less in the blessed homeland beyond.

"So I go on not knowing. I would not if I might;
I would rather walk in the dark with God than go alone in the light;
I would rather walk with him by faith than walk alone by sight."

LESSON VII.—February 17.

LOT'S CHOICE.—Genesis 13: 1-13.

READ Genesis 13, 14, 19. COMMIT vs. 8, 9.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*Take heed and beware of covetousness.*—LUKE 12: 15.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Scriptural Sayings Illustrated in this Story of Abraham.—"Blessed are the peacemakers": Matt. 5: 9. "A soft answer turneth away wrath": Prov. 15: 1. "A new commandment give I unto you": John 13: 34. "In honor preferring one another": Rom. 12: 10. "Charity suffereth long and is kind," etc.: 1 Cor. 13: 4-8. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men": Rom. 12: 18, 21. "Walk in love": Eph. 5: 2. "Let brotherly love continue": Heb. 13: 1. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," etc.: Psalm 133. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God": Matt. 6: 31-34.

Scriptural Sayings Illustrated in Lot.—Not to keep company with an idolater, railer, etc.: 1 Cor. 5: 9-11; 2 Thes. 3: 6, 14, 15. "Evil communications corrupt good manners": 1 Cor. 15: 33. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly": Psal. 1: 1. "If sinners entice, . . . walk not thou in the way with them": Prov. 1: 10-16. "Enter not the path of the wicked": Prov. 4: 14; 22: 24, 25. "A companion of fools shall be destroyed": Prov. 13: 20. "Be ye not unequally yoked together," etc.: 2 Cor. 6: 14-18. "Be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues": Rev. 18: 4. Consider the moral problems at issue, the arguments, the dangers, the results.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

In the London *Strand Magazine* there has lately been a series of articles in which a company of men are interesting one another in this wise,—one of them tells a story, and then another is requested to draw a picture representing it on the blackboard.

In this lesson is the story of two men acting on different principles, and in the history we learn the results of each course.

Let your class, as in the company of men referred to, draw two Word-Pictures, one of Abraham and one of Lot, either by voice or by writing on a blackboard or slips of paper.

Put in one all the characteristics of Abraham, as found in the whole story; in the other, all they can find concerning Lot, which has to do with his choice and its consequences.

Add to the pictures all they can find in the Bible that sets the pictures out more clearly.

In the background place all they can find in history or in their observation that makes the pictures still more vivid.

LEARN BY HEART.

V. 8; Psalm 133; Prov. 15: 1.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible*, "Abraham." F. W. Robertson's *Notes on Genesis*, Lectures V. and VI. Alexander Whyte's *Bible Characters*, "Abraham," "Lot." Meyer's *Abraham*, or "The Obedience of Faith." Tomkin's *Abraham and His Age. Revelation by Character*, "Self-Conscious Lot," by R. Tuck. Professor Ely's *Social Law of Service*. The *Expositor's Bible* on Genesis, by Professor Dods, is excellent on this lesson. Mark Hopkins' *The Law of Love and Love as Law*.

Chapter 14 is one on which many chapters have been written, and is discussed in nearly all the books on Genesis and the early history of the Hebrews. "Amraphel" of this chapter is identified with the "Hammurabi" of the lately discovered monument in Persia.

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Contrast in *Pilgrim's Progress* the loving union of Christian, Faithful, and Hopeful and the straying of Christian into By-Path Meadow. Eber's *Uarda* gives a good picture of Egypt at this time; Longfellow's *Ladder of Augustine* gives an illustration of how Abraham rose above his sin in Egypt; an illustration of strife from prosperity may be found in "Malleville" of Abbott's *Franconia Stories*.

Mrs. Gatty's *Parables from Nature*, "Imperfect Instruments"; Bulwer's *Pilgrims of the Rhine*, "The Journey of the Virtues"; Prof. Henry Drummond's *The Greatest Thing in the World*.

HOME WORK
AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The character of Abraham.
The character of Lot.
The human nature of the saints and the right use to be made of their short-comings.
How far their career and the results of their lives depended on their characters.
How to settle difficulties between brothers and sisters.
Which was the more manly course, Abraham's or Lot's?
What was the danger in Lot's choice?
Pitching the tent toward Sodom.
Effects of the two courses.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Two Careers.
The Two Choices (v. 1).

I. HUMAN SAINTS, ABRAHAM AND LOT.
Imperfections of Abraham.
Imperfections of Lot.
The difference in their characters.
What use to make of the imperfections of saints.

II. INCREASING WEALTH AND ITS DANGERS (vs. 2-7).

III. ABRAHAM THE PEACEMAKER (vs. 8, 9).

Scriptures illustrated by Abraham.
Fruits of his character and position.

IV. THE FATEFUL CHOICE OF LOT, PITCHING HIS TENT TOWARD SODOM (vs. 10-13).

V. WHY LOT'S CHOICE WAS FOOLISH AND DANGEROUS.

Six reasons appear in the narrative.

AGELESS HYMN.

"Blest be the tie that binds."

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL
QUESTIONS.

What are your decisions as to keeping company with bad companions?

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — Probably within a few years of Abraham's arrival in Canaan in 1921. The Bible margins make it B. C. 1918. Prof. W. J. Beecher places the visit to Egypt (Genesis 12), the separation from Lot, Lot's captivity and rescue, all within the eleven years before Abraham married Hagar (Gen. 12: 4; 16: 16); and adds "within a century or two of 1963."

Place. — Abraham was at a place near Bethel, 12 miles north of Jerusalem (v. 3). After the separation he moved to Hebron, 32 miles further south.

Lot went to the vicinity of Sodom and the cities of the Plain, the Circle, either at the north or the south of the Dead Sea. See Lesson IX.

1. And A'brām went up out of E'gypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lōt with him, ^{south.} into the ^{South.}

¹ Gen. 12: 9.

I. Human Saints. — V. 1. In our last lesson we left Abraham worshiping God at his altar near Bethel. But he was not yet ready to settle down. He must look over the extent of his promised inheritance, the land flowing with milk and honey. With the



From Breasted's "History of Egypt," Chas. Scribner's Sons.

Head of Amenemhat III.

From a Sphinx found at Tanis. Type of Egyptian in the time of Abraham.

glorious promises fresh in his mind, with the assurance that he was a child of God, protected and blessed by him, he would naturally dream of "a Paradise, bright, peaceful, luxurious"; a Utopia, a "Garden of the gods." He traveled toward the south, not only in a southerly direction, but toward the large district in the southern part of Palestine including Hebron and Beersheba, called the Negeb, that is "The South," just as we call the Southern States the South, whether we are in the Northern States or in England or in Mexico, without regard to the actual direction from the place of our sojourn.

But now came a famine. The pastures were parched and bare, the water-courses dry, his cattle were dying of hunger and thirst, in strange contrast with the evergreen fields and blooming gardens of his native land. He must have asked himself as Bunyan's Pilgrim in the Slough of Despond, "Is this the happiness you have told me all this while of?" It was his first experience of famine.

TWO IMPERFECTIONS IN ABRAHAM'S FAITH AND LIFE. Abraham was still in process of making. He had not yet attained. He made two errors.

1. To escape a famine, which he might have escaped by going to another part of Canaan, he left the Promised Land and went down into Egypt, which had already attained a high civilization, full of heathenism, worldliness, and luxury, which has a great fascination and charm to one who first enters its enchanted circles, especially when, as was the case in Egypt, there were many good precepts in its religion.

This environment, the moral malaria of educated and brilliant worldliness, doubtless made him more susceptible to the next temptation.

2. In Egypt he felt in danger of his life, because his wife was very beautiful. He feared that the Pharaoh would kill him in order to obtain her for his harem, nor were his fears groundless. "Possibly," says Professor Dods, "he may have heard the ugly story which has recently been deciphered from an old papyrus, and which tells how one of the Pharaohs, acting on the advice of his princes, sent armed men to fetch a beautiful woman and make away with her husband."

To escape this danger he told a lie which was a formal truth, that Sarah was his sister, for she was his half-sister. Pharaoh took her, but troubles arose; he released her and sent her back to Abraham with a reproof. The worshiper of the true God was rebuked by a man of the world.

COMPARE Bunyan's Pilgrim, who strayed into By-Path Meadow, and fell into the hands of Giant Despair, and slept in the arbor where he lost his roll.

LOT'S IMPERFECTIONS. Lot was a good man at heart. We are told in 2 Peter that "righteous Lot" was "sore distressed" by the lascivious life of the wicked, "For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their lawless deeds" (2 Pet. 2: 7, 8).

But Lot's life and character were on a much lower level than Abraham's. He was repelled by the gross wickedness of Sodom, but the less obtrusive sins of the heart were not so repulsive to him. Condemning the gross corruptions and wrongs of others may possibly consist with a hard judgment of others and a wrong spirit, such as the Pharisees had toward the publicans.

Not only had Lot less character and fewer and weaker virtues than his uncle, but he fell into serious errors and temptations, from which one of Abraham's character and piety would have escaped and passed on unharmed. This was his fundamental error. He lived

at the base of the mountain of holiness, and not on its light-crowned top. As we read through his history we note his selfish choice, his going gradually into the influence of Sodom, his moral weaknesses mingled with strength.

It is quite possible that he was affected by the contamination by Egypt more than Abraham was, and made a misuse of the error he saw in him.

He accompanied Abraham **out of Egypt . . . into the south**, but he took too much of Egypt with him in his moral character.

REMARKS ON HUMAN SAINTS AS ILLUSTRATED BY ABRAHAM AND LOT. 1. Every good and great man in the Bible of whom much is recorded, save Jesus, had imperfections, weaknesses, or sins, especially in the process of his training.

2. It makes a difference whether these occur in earlier or later life as to the lessons they teach us.

3. We must judge of the guilt of human saints, of the effect on their character, by the times in which they lived, and not by the light and moral development of our times. Abraham's lie was bad, although in the form of truth. Even in our day Orientals would not think he did very wrong. Even men that stand very high to-day tell worse lies under far less provocation. And many things done by good people to-day, enmeshed as they are in customs which they do not make or approve, will be severely condemned, and rightly, not many years hence. So we should be careful of our judgments, not of the sin, but of the guilt of the acts we condemn in past history of good men and good institutions.

4. God used these imperfect men to advance his kingdom. They did a great deal of good. Nearly all the progress in the world has been made by imperfect instruments, by human saints.

"There's a fleck of rust on a flawless blade —
On the armor of price there's one;
There's a mole on the cheek of the lovely maid —
There are spots upon the sun.

But the blade of Damascus has succored the weak,
The shield saved a knight from a fall;
The mole is a grace on my lady's cheek —
The sun, it shines for all."

—S. A. Walker.

These imperfect instruments accomplished their good work because they were right at heart, in their main character; and the fleck of rust, the spots on the sun, the mole on the cheek are incidental, and not destructive of the essential good character and nature. If instead of the fleck of rust on the blade bad material had been used in its making, the Damascus blade could never have "succored the weak."

5. We are to judge of men, of institutions, of the church, as a whole. It is a false judgment that measures an apple-tree by a few wormy or ill-grown apples, or a garden by its few weeds, and not by the glory of its flowers.

6. Note the different effects of their failures and falls into temptation upon the two types of character. Abraham, when he found himself wrong, went out of temptation; Lot went into temptation by going to Sodom. Abraham saw and felt the evil, and was chastened in spirit, and took warning; so that he became a peacemaker. The experience of his weakness made him feel more deeply the need of a divine life. Out of bitter came the sweet, out of the fall a swifter rise. Because Abraham built altars wherever he went he was a missionary, letting his light shine. This is God's way with his people, paving with their failures the way to better things.

"St. Augustine! well hast thou said
That of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame.

"Nor deem the irrevocable Past
As wholly wasted, wholly vain,
If, rising on its wrecks, at last
To something noble we attain."

Lot, much of whose goodness came from his dwelling with Abraham, made a selfish and worldly choice, and showed that his Egyptian experience had made him worse instead of better, and soothed his conscience instead of making the evil repulsive.

7. What are we to do in view of the faults of good men?

(a) We must not imitate their faults, and make them an excuse for our wrong-doing. Where is there a greater blindness than to imagine we are like a great or good man because we can copy his faults? We are apt to go much farther than they in error. Who of us dare say that we would not have told such a lie as Abraham did, a literal truth with deceptive heart, in order to save our lives?

(b) We must not let the fact that good men have done wrong soothe our consciences, or blind us to the evil of sin, but make us hate it the more.

2. ¹ And A'brām ^{1000s} ^{was} very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.
3. And he went on his journeys from the ^{South} ^{South} even to Beth-el, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Beth-el and ^{Hai} ^{Hi};
4. ^{Unto} ^{unto} the ² place of the altar, which he had made there at the first : and there A'brām ³ called on the name of the LORD.
5. And Lōt also, which went with A'brām, had flocks, and herds, and tents.

¹ Gen. 24: 35; Psa. 112: 3; Prov. 10: 22.

² Gen. 12: 7, 8.

³ Psa. 116: 17.

(c) It must lead us to "think gently of the erring one," who

"Hath but stumbled in the path
We have in weakness trod."

(d) It should give us comfort and courage and hope, amid our failings and errors and falls, to know that if we repent and forsake and strive against them God can still enable us to serve him and aid his cause. Though we have fallen like Peter, yet when chastened and able, say, "Thou knowest I love thee." God may yet say to us, "Feed my lambs and shepherd my sheep."

II. Increasing Wealth and Its Dangers. — Vs. 2-7. **2. And Abram was very rich.** "The danger of riches appears prominently here, in the very first case in which riches, as such, are mentioned." — *Lange*.

Abraham was now a kind of prince, or sheik; for we learn that not long after this he had 318 home-born men of war (Gen. 14: 14), which implies at least 1,000 or 1,500 persons in his encampment. Compare the wealth of Job, as given in Job, chapter 1, and doubled in Job, chapter 42. His riches were honest riches, growing out of faithfulness and skill and the blessing of God. It has been suggested that he found a good market in Egypt for his cattle, which were highly prized; and also the fertile regions of Goshen, where centuries later his descendants were settled, were peculiarly favorable to the increase of flocks and herds. Our word "pecunia," money, wealth, is derived from the Latin *pecus*, "cattle," "a herd."

3. And he went on his journeys. "By marches, by stages, and so by degrees." — *Dillmann*. "By stations — halting places in military diction — as he was able and saw fit." — *Delitzsch*. **Very rich** of v. 2 means "very heavy by reason of" cattle. His movements must have been very slow. He was viewing the Promised Land. He was learning to be a pilgrim and a stranger, looking away from the present to the far beyond, that its light might shine on his daily life. He was learning lessons of faith and hope. **Between Beth-el and Hai.** The place where he made his first more permanent stopping-place after he left Haran (Gen. 12: 7, 8), as is indicated by its being the first place where he builded an altar unto Jehovah.

4. Abram called on the name of the Lord. At the old altar he re-established his public and family religious life. "Doubtless Dean Stanley is right in saying that Egypt represented to him what we call the 'world.' And Abram had shaken off its dust from his feet, and returned to 'a closer walk with God.'" — *Tomkins*. He thus kept bright the fires of a religious life, the best safeguard against temptation, and he proclaimed by his altar, and the kind of life his religion produced, the one true God and the one true religion to his heathen neighbors.

WHAT ABRAHAM TEACHES US ABOUT FAMILY WORSHIP. (1) Wherever we are we should have a religious home. (2) Every person needs not only to worship, but to have a stated place of worship, around which gather the most hallowed associations. (3) The altar should be a family altar. Nothing so binds together a family in harmony and love as worship and prayer together. (4) This religious home is also a witness and invitation to all around. It is a profession of our religion, in a way to summon others to come to the true God and the true religion. (5) If we do not find a church and Sunday school where we go, we should institute one. It is a poor religion which cannot travel. That light burns very dim which does not shine out in the darkness.

5. And Lot also. He gained much by being in company with such a man as Abraham. He was one of the men whose power lay in his associations. The man that treated his nephew so generously as is described in this lesson must have been generous to him long before. This act was but one illustration of a lifetime of the same spirit.

6. And ¹ the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together.

7. And there was ² a strife between the herdmen of A'brām's cattle and the herdmen of Lōt's cattle: ³ and the Cā'nāan-ite and the Pēr'iz-zite dwelled then in the land.

8. And A'brām said unto Lōt, ⁴ Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we ^{be} ^{are} brethren.

¹ Gen. 36: 7.² Gen. 26: 20.³ Gen. 12: 6.⁴ 1 Cor. 6: 7.

6. And the land was not able to bear them. That is, "The land did not furnish space enough for the numerous herds to graze." — *Keil*. Nor water enough for their thirst.

7. And there was a strife. "As the inevitable result of this the rival shepherds, eager to secure the best pasture for their own flocks and the best wells for their own cattle and camels, came to high words and probably to blows about their respective rights." — *Dods*. And the Canaanite. "The lowlander," the descendants of Canaan, fourth son of Ham, after whom the land was named. And the Perizzite. "The highlander," or dweller in the hills and mountains of Palestine where Bethel was situated. The Perizzites probably dwelt in unvalled villages, and the Canaanites in walled towns, being more exposed to raiders. Compare the Scotch Highlanders and Lowlanders. These tribes are mentioned (1) to show one reason why there was not room around Bethel for both Abraham and Lot; and (2) perhaps to show that Abraham felt that the eyes of the heathen were upon him to see how his religion would lead its disciples to live and act under trying circumstances. He was as a city set upon a hill.

NOTE that special dangers and temptations always accompany riches. "Be sure of this," says F. W. Robertson, "there is no rich and prosperous man we look at who has not paid his price — it may be in loss of domestic peace, in anxiety, or in enfeebled health." Wealth is a blessing or a curse, according to the character of those who possess it. It was a blessing to Abraham, but a curse to the Sodomites. It is not safe for the world to grow rich faster than it grows good.

LESSONS ABOUT FAMILY QUARRELS. (1) There is special danger of quarrels in the family and among kindred, and in earnest churches where there are strong belief and active work, because there are so many conflicting interests among them. Those with nothing in common may be an hundred times worse in character, but their evil deeds will not take the form of strife. (2) Quarrels almost always begin in little things. Very often they arise from the distribution of property. "There is always trouble about money, or without money."

"The kindest and the happiest pair
Will find occasion to forbear;

And something, every day they live,
To pity, and perhaps forgive."

(3) Family strife is an exceeding great evil to all concerned. (4) It is a great injury to the community and to religion when these strifes arise among church members. For, as Dr. Parker says, "The Canaanite and Perizzite are still in the land." (5) Stop every such quarrel in the beginning, before a match's flame becomes a burning city, or a little leak a devastating flood. (6) Trials, like that described in this lesson, both reveal character and develop it, as the fire reveals the dross in the gold and purifies from it.

III. Abraham the Peacemaker. — Vs. 8, 9. 8. And Abram said unto Lot. As the older, as the richer, as the more favored of God, as the better and more generous man, Abraham speaks first. Let there be no strife . . . between me and thee. "It is evident that Lot was beginning to take part with his herdmen, and regard himself as an injured man." And there was danger that the quarrel of the servants might soon alienate their masters. For we be brethren. In kinship, in love, in interests, and especially in religion. If we are brethren, let us act like brothers, and not like enemies. The love between brethren of the same family or church should overcome the danger of strife.

9. ¹ ^{Is} not the whole land before thee? separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: ² if *thou wilt take* the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if *thou depart to* the right hand, then I will go to the left.

10. And Löt lifted up his eyes, and beheld all ³ the ^{plain} of Jor'dan, that it ^{was} well watered every where, before the LORD ⁴ destroyed Sód'om and Go-mör'rah, ⁵ ^{even as} like the garden of the LORD, like the land of E'gypt, as thou ^{comest} unto ⁶ Zo'ar.

11. ^{Thou} ^{So} Löt chose him all the ^{plain} of Jor'dan; and Löt journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

¹ Gen. 20: 15; 34: 10.

² Rom. 12: 18; Heb. 12: 14; Jas. 3: 17.

³ Gen. 19: 17.

⁴ Gen. 19: 24, 25.

⁵ Gen. 2: 10.

⁶ Gen. 14: 2, 8.

9. **Is not the whole land before thee?** That is, I willingly give you the choice of the whole. "*Divide ut maneat amicitia*, 'separate, that friendship may remain,' is, as Ambrosius expresses it, the moral of this story." — *Delitzsch*.

ABRAHAM'S BROTHERLY LOVE. (1) It was a most unselfish act, renouncing his own interests in favor of his friend. (2) It was a giving up of his rights. Abraham had the first right to the land. It was promised to him, and not to Lot. Then he was the elder and the richer of the two. Lot had accompanied him, not he Lot. (3) It was an act of faith; for it seemed to be giving up to others, for the sake of peace, the land promised to himself.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS. "The active, heroic promoters of peace in a world full of alienation, party passion, and strife." — *Exp. Greek Test.* To make peace and keep the peace with others is often a costly blessing. It means self-control; it means giving up sometimes our rights; it means government of the tongue; it means moral heroism, the mother of all that is heroic.

OVERCOMING EVIL WITH GOOD. So Abraham overcame the evil of strife with the good of brotherly love.

"The true way to 'overcome evil' is to melt it by fiery coals of gentleness. That is God's way. An iceberg may be crushed to powder, but every fragment is still ice. Only sunshine that melts it will turn it into sweet water. Love is conqueror, and the only conqueror, and its conquest is to transform hate into love." — *Maclaren*.

NEW VISIONS AND POSSIBILITIES. After the cleansing from his error and his proof that he had grown in character by his treatment of Lot there came to Abraham a broader vision, and a fuller content of the promises God had made to him before. He was able to receive greater things. Nearly all the eight repetitions of the promises, each larger and fuller than the earlier ones, were given after some great struggle and victory. They were crowns to him that overcometh. Compare the duties and privileges which Jesus gave to Peter after he had repented and declared his larger and deeper love (John 21: 15-17).

IV. The Fateful Choice of Lot, Who Pitched His Tent Toward Sodom. — Vs. 10-13. 10. **Lot lifted up his eyes.** From the Bethel hills he could see a wide range of country. **The plain of Jordan.** "One of the remarkable depressions in the world is that of the Dead Sea and the plains at each end." — *Conder*. See Lesson IX. **Before the Lord destroyed Sodom.** See Lesson IX. The destruction of Sodom doubtless changed the face of the country. If at the southern end the waters may have overflowed that plain. **Even as the garden of the Lord.** Even as the paradise from which Adam was sent forth, and whose glories still lingered in the memories of the race. "Although the immediate vicinity of the Dead Sea is barren enough, the Ghor, or deep depression at the northern and southern extremities, teems with life and vegetation." — *Palmer's Desert of the Exodus*. **Like the land of Egypt.** The richest and most fertile land then known. **As thou comest unto Zoar.** Probably "on the southeast shore of the Dead Sea." — *Dillmann*.

11. **Then Lot chose him all the plain.** "Not only because of its great fertility, but because this region lay on the great route of Eastern travel, and promised to the keen eye of Lot a rich market for the produce of his flocks, as well as the luxuries and refinements of wealth." — *Geikie*.

12. **Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan,** the land promised to him, while Lot practically gave up his share in the promise, like Esau who sold his birthright, for Lot

12. A'brām dwelled in the land of Cā'nāan, and Lōt ¹ dwelled in the cities of the ^{plain.} plain, and ² pitched his tent ^{toward} as far as Sōd'om.

13. ^{But} Now the men of Sōd'om ³ were wicked and ⁴ sinners ^{before} against the LORD exceedingly.

¹ Gen. 19: 29.

² Gen. 14: 12; 2 Pet. 2: 7, 8.

³ Gen. 18: 20; 2 Pet. 2: 7, 8.

⁴ Gen. 6: 11.

dwelled in the cities of the plain. R. v., "Plain." Pitched his tent toward Sodom. R. v., "Moved his tent (now here, now there) as far as Sodom." He kept moving nearer and nearer to the very center of wickedness.

13. But the men of Sodom were wicked. This is stated to show the mistake of Lot's choice, and the danger he encountered from pitching his tent near them. Sinners before (or against) the Lord exceedingly. That is, so openly and boldly sinners that their sin was a defiance of God, and demanded the attention of heaven. Not ten good men could be found in it, including Lot (Genesis 18).

LIBRARY. The story of Hercules' choice in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* and Pizarro's choice in Prescott's *Peru*.

V. Why Lot's Choice Was Foolish and Dangerous. — 1. It was selfish. It marked a deterioration in his character, and was the upas-tree root of all his later troubles. Selfishness is the climate in which every wrong, every bitter plant flourishes. "Self-centered policy is always short-sighted policy," says Robert Tuck. "It involves self-delusion," "seeing everything through colored glass."

2. It was the choice of worldly advantages at the expense of spiritual good and noble character. It was the selling of his spiritual birthright for a mess of worldly pottage, and much poorer pottage he found it in the end than the better choice would have given. His spiritual life, the character and religious welfare of his family were left out of view, as he dreamed of wealth and greatness.

3. His choice cost him his greatest helps toward a good and peaceful life, the influence and atmosphere of God's people, and the hopes and promises of the future.

4. He committed the folly of going voluntarily into temptation. One can go into evil company when compelled to, or as a missionary to do people good, and be safe so long as he is striving mightily for their good. Compare Daniel in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, Joseph in the court of Pharaoh, missionaries in any heathen land. But he cannot choose bad company for his own pleasure, and live in it, without being weakened and contaminated.

Christians in the world are like ships in the ocean, safe so long as the ocean is not in the ship. But when the world is in our hearts, and we parley with temptation, we are already more than half fallen. Farrar speaks of two kinds of temptation, — one is like the adder, insidious, creeping, but fascinating, bewitching; the other comes like a wild beast, springing upon us suddenly, "terrible and with tiger's leaps." But there is another more dangerous still, like a malaria, slowly, imperceptibly undermining the constitution.

Pray, pray day and night, watch and pray.

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION. "How does that prayer brand the guilt, the depravity, the insanity, of those who seek temptation? who revel in temptation? who roll it as a sweet morsel under the tongue? who go out of their way to provide, to create, to intensify temptations for themselves? If the righteous scarcely be saved — if they barely escape the wiles of the wicked one who strive and pray — with what fierce teeth shall they be mangled, with what envenomed claws shall they be rent, who deliberately feed the furious wild beasts of their own most animal passions; who by their own acts add fuel to those devouring flames? . . . They are like the poor moths that rush to scorch themselves to death. They need no devil to tempt them. They are devils to themselves. Their own worst devils, they light the flames of their own self-consuming hells." — Canon Farrar.

5. Such are they who "pitch their tents toward Sodom." They are like those who are sailing in the outer circles of the Maelstrom, moving steadily, more and more swiftly toward its devouring gulf.

6. In the history that follows we see into what Lot's foolish choice brought him — the loss of his property, the ruin of his family, a lonely old age, a warning when he might have been a blessing.

LESSON VIII. — February 24. GOD'S COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM.

Genesis 15: 1, 5-16.

READ Gen. 15: 17. COMMIT vs. 5, 6.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *He believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness.* — GEN. 15: 6.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

The eight different promises or covenants with Abraham. Note the circumstances under which each one was made and why. Note the successive dates. Note the progressive character of the promises, the degrees by which Abraham learned the full significance of the divine covenant, and the destiny in store for his posterity. Compare Gal. 3: 9-29; Rom. 2: 28, 29; Psalms 103: 17, 18; Isaiah 59: 21; Ezekiel 36: 26-31.

First Promise,	Gen. 12: 1-3.
Second Promise,	12: 7.
Third Promise,	13: 14-17.
Fourth Promise,	15: 1, 5, 6, 18.
Fifth Promise,	17: 1-10, 19.
Sixth Promise,	18: 18, 19.
Seventh Promise,	21: 12.
Eighth Promise,	22: 16-18.

How have these been fulfilled? A gradual accomplishment of gradual promises.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

For older classes a study of the promises as given above can be made very interesting.

For all we can apply the teaching of this long-ago covenant, reaching down through the centuries to to-day, to the covenant God through Jesus makes with us.

A study of the signs and symbols of the covenant with Abraham, the reason for them, and the right use of them brings needed lessons on our use of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as symbols of God's covenant with us and ours with him.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: God's Promises for Hour of Need.

I. THE HEROISM OF PEACEFUL ABRAHAM (Genesis 14).

Results of Lot's choice.
Abraham comes to his rescue.
Instructive lessons.

II. THE NATURAL REACTION AND DISCOURAGEMENT.

III. THE COVENANT PROMISE RENEWED (vs. 1-4).

Imparting Faith, Hope, and Love.
The Lord a shield.
God himself the best reward.

IV. SIGNS AND SYMBOLS OF THE COVENANT (vs. 5, 6).

Five symbols. God's signs for us.

V. THE COVENANT OF BLOOD (vs. 7-16).

The vision. Its meaning.
Its message.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 5, 6; 2 Pet. 1: 4; Psalms 103: 17, 18.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Lord, I am thine, entirely thine."
"For all the saints who from their labors rest."

CHRONOLOGICAL CHIMES.

Hammurabi, king of Persia, whose monument was found at Susa a few years ago, was a contemporary of Abraham. He was the Amraphel of chapter 14. The name of Chedorlaomar, who led the expedition against Sodom, has been found on a tablet of Hammurabi. — *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*. Bricks with his name are now in the British Museum, and "Salem" is found on the Tel-el-Amarna tablets.

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Reasons for Abraham's discouragement.
The eight times repeated covenant, and its increasing blessing.
God as a shield.
God himself our reward.
The symbols of God's covenant and their value to him.
The symbols of God's covenant with us.
How God's covenant promise to Abraham has been fulfilled.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Have you entered into covenant with God, to love and serve him forever?

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—The date in the margin of our Bibles is "about 1913," three to six years after our last lesson. See Lesson VI.

Place.—Abraham's tent was among the Oaks of Mamre, a part of Hebron, 20 miles south of Jerusalem. Here was his home for many years.

REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Books on Abraham referred to in our last lesson.

H. C. Trumbull's *The Blood Covenant* and his *Covenant of Salt*.

On the numbers of the stars, see Sir R. S.

Ball's and Prof. Simon Newcomb's *Astronomy for Everybody*.

Hugh Macmillan's *Bible Teachings in Nature*, chap. 1.

Professor Pinches' *Old Testament in the Light of the Historical Records*, "Abraham."

Professor Hommel's *Ancient Hebrew Tradition, as Illustrated by the Monuments*, "Abraham and Hammurabi."

Meyer's comments on these chapters, "Abraham" (96-112), are very fine. Dods, in the *Expositor*. *Genesis* (134-171), is equally suggestive, but very different.

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Jacox's *Secular Annotations*, "To every star a name."

I. The Heroism of Peaceful Abraham.—Genesis 14. The parting of the ways of Abraham and Lot is followed by a picture of what each found in his chosen path, the appropriate outcome of each choice; on the one hand visions and promises, on the other captivity and loss.

It is well represented by that beautiful parabolic picture by Thomas Cole. A rocky, precipitous mountain divides the picture. In the words of Dr. Abbott, "Upon the right a road leading through flowery meadows toward a prospect whose beauty, veiled in a golden haze, is suggestive of allurement; on the left, a rugged path leading up the mountainside into clouds and darkness—the one the path of pleasure and perdition, the other the path of duty, self-denial, and achievement."

ONE OF THE RESULTS OF LOT'S CHOICE was that, living in bad company, he was captured with the Sodomites by the devastating army from Elam, the great power then in the rich plains east of the Tigris. Sodom and the cities of "the circle" of the Jordan had been paying tribute to Chedorlaomer of Elam, but, weary of the yoke, they had rebelled. Now, the Jordan valley "was the main route for trading caravans and for military expeditions between the Euphrates and Egypt. Whoever held that valley might prove a most formidable annoyance and, indeed, an absolute interruption to commercial or political relations between Egypt and Elam, or the Eastern powers. . . . A rebellion therefore of these chiefs occupying the vale of Siddim was sufficiently important to bring the king of Elam from his distant capital, attaching to his army as he came his tributaries, including Amraphel (Hammurabi), king of Shinar or northern Chaldea."—Dods.

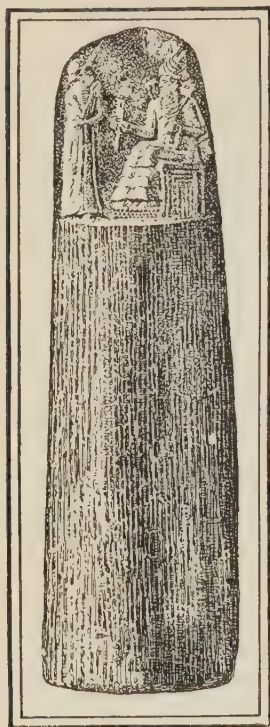
This was no border foray, but an attack by one of the two great powers of those times. The great army swept swiftly along the borders of the Dead Sea, overcame the confederate town, of which Sodom was the chief, and with the prisoners and spoils of that rich region marches without delay to the northward, nor stops till it has reached Holah near Damascus, 120 miles from the scene of the slaughter.

ABRAHAM TO THE RESCUE. In the meantime, one of those escaped from the disaster hastened to Abraham and told him how his nephew Lot had been carried away captive. Abraham, the peaceful chieftain, living in tents at Hebron away from the traveled routes, had not been counted by Chedorlaomer as a source of danger, and hence was left undisturbed.

Immediately Abraham armed 318 of his retainers, and with three confederate friends went in pursuit. He overtook the army in the vicinity of Damascus, and by a skillful stratagem and night attack, like that of Gideon and his 300, he gained a victory over the much larger host, and rescued not only the family and possessions of Lot, but also those of the Sodomites which had been taken with him.

SEVERAL VERY INSTRUCTIVE LESSONS are taught us by this action of Abraham.

1. Abraham was a man of peace, and this brilliant act of war and the victory seem unnatural and unexpected. But when a man of peace fights, he fights for a Cause, a Principle, for the help of the weak, and not for his own advantage. Hence God is with him, for he is with God, and that makes him wise and strong. Moreover, the best preparation for such a warfare is not great standing armies, but faithfulness in the duties of peace, standing firm against wrongs and unrighteousness. Victories over temptation fit one for all victories the peaceful man needs to gain.



Monument of Hammurabi,
Containing His Code.

The monument on which the code of Hammurabi is engraved is a black diorite nearly eight feet high. It was found in December, 1901, among the ruins in ancient Susa, the Biblical Shushan of Esther, the modern Sûs in Southwest Persia. At the top is a bas-relief exhibiting King Hammurabi receiving the laws from the sun god. Its date is about 2250 B.C.

The fact that directly after this victory there came another vision and renewal of the promise implies that Abraham had to fight another battle, a fierce conflict with temptation and doubt.

1. There was the natural reaction after a brave and exciting deed and his noble act of self-denying generosity, which had wrought his soul up to a high and noble enthusiasm. Almost all men of great faith and of stirring deeds have had their seasons of discouragement and depression. Moses (Num. 11: 10-15). The Psalmist (Psa. 10: 1). Elijah, after his mighty deed on Carmel, lay down under the "juniper" tree, and wished to die. John the Baptist, in the dungeon of Macherus after his great labors and courageous deeds, sent to Jesus to know if he, whom he had pointed out as the Lamb of God, was really the Messiah. Almost every worker for God has at some time been with Bunyan's Christian and Hopeful in Doubting Castle of Giant Despair, and forgotten that he had the key of deliverance in his bosom.

2. He, as the head of a small clan, had incurred the enmity of several of the great and rising powers of the East, who had large armies at their command. How did he know

The greatest heroes in the world are those who gain victories in the moral world over sin and temptation on the battlefields of one's own heart, and over the wrongs and crimes which are destroying their country.

2. Abraham was a hero long before this, a moral hero, the highest kind of hero, on several other occasions, but this act brought his heroism into clearer knowledge. Great men are developed by great occasions. We do not know what is in ourselves or in others till the occasions for manifesting it arise. The only way is to be faithful and true all the time.

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear."

"Some mute, inglorious Milton here may rest."

But some day the gem will be seen, and mute intellects will find their sphere in this world or the next.

3. Abraham placed God's honor before his own advantage in refusing to take for himself the spoils of war that were both earned and offered, because it would give the impression that men, and not his God, had made him rich, and would have lessened the power of his example. He knew that God could give him the land without wrong-doing on his part, and therein he had more faith than his grandson Jacob in his youth.

So Moody and Sankey refused to take for their own use any of the copyright on the *Gospel Hymns*, amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars, lest the taking of it should interfere with their success in leading men to Christ, because some would think they used these books for the money in them, and were preaching and singing for gain.

So Eleazar, the aged, when threatened with torture and death unless he ate swine's flesh, refused to make believe he ate it while he really ate food clean to a Jew, because if he did many young persons would think he had abjured his true religion. So he died "to leave a notable example to such as be young to die willingly and courageously for the honorable and holy laws" (2 Macc. 6: 18-31).

4. This new work was a training in faith. His victory was the victory of faith. He was tried in every direction to make him an all-around, complete man.

5. It is noticeable that Lot felt so little the spiritual situation and the warning that he went back to Sodom to live, and dwelt within its walls, as if thus he would be safer.

II. The Natural Reaction and Discouragement.

1. After these things the word of the LORD came unto A'brām¹ in a vision, saying, ² Fear not, A'brām: I ^{am} thy ³ shield, *and* thy exceeding ⁴ great reward.

5. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and ⁵ tell the ⁶ stars, if thou be able to ^{number} tell them: and he said unto him, ⁷ So shall thy seed be.

6. And he ⁸ believed in the LORD; and he ⁹ counted it to him for righteousness.

¹ Dan. 10: 1; Acts 10: 10, 11.

² Gen. 26: 24; Luke 1: 13, 30.

³ Psa. 3: 3.

⁴ Psa. 16: 5.

⁵ Psa. 147: 4.

⁶ Jer. 33: 22.

⁷ Gen. 22: 17; Ex. 32: 13; Rom. 4: 18;

Heb. 11: 12.

⁸ Rom. 4: 3; Gal. 3: 6.

⁹ Psa. 106: 31.

that the defeated kings might not soon return in overpowering force and bring swift destruction on him and all his?

3. Disappointed hopes. He was disappointed in Lot, whom he had loved and treated as a son. He probably included him in his hopes of the future promised him. The promise given just after Lot's departure (in our last lesson) that his seed should be "as the dust of the earth" was doubtless to reassure him. This twice repeated promise had not yet been fulfilled, though more than a dozen years had elapsed since the first call. He had no child, and yet he had been promised descendants as the dust of the earth for multitude. He was a lonely, childless old man.

III. The Covenant Promise Renewed. Imparting Faith, Hope, and Love. — Vs. 1-4. 1. After these things.

Because these things, as we have seen above, required new help from God. The trials were intended to increase Abraham's faith and give power to his example to the faithful through all ages. He was being trained up in God's school, where the lessons were sometimes very hard to learn. And part of the example lay in the sustaining aid, the new visions, the closer communion with God. God gives to those who trust in him.

"Who comes to God an inch, through doubtings dim,
In blazing light God will advance a mile to him." — *Sayings of Rabia.*

But note also that these trials occupied but a small part of his life. The most of his life was peaceful and prosperous.

F. B. Meyer calls attention to the fact that in this chapter occur for the first time in Scripture four striking passages.

1. **The word of the Lord came.** "Repeated thereafter with many charming variations."

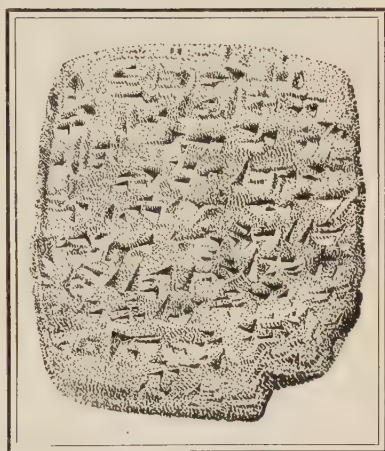
2. **Fear not.** "For the first time rings out this silver chime of divine assurance."

3. **I am thy shield.**

4. (V. 6) **Believed.** "Now we first meet in human history that great, that mighty word 'BELIEVED.'"

THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME.

"God is not dumb, that he should speak no more;
If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness
And find'st not Sinai, 'tis thy soul is poor;
There towers the mountain of the Voice no less,



Tell-el-Amarna Letter.

An interesting document from the early East. The letter is written on clay tablet in the Babylonian wedge-shaped characters, and was discovered in 1888.

Which whoso seeks shall find; but he who bends,
Intent on manna still and mortal ends,
Sees it not, neither hears its thundered lore."

— *Lovell.*

THE LORD GOD A SHIELD. I (the Lord God Almighty) **am thy shield.** Abraham had many a fierce enemy, and small defense from the great armies from the north. He had, besides, all the spiritual enemies which assail us, — the principalities and powers of evil, Apollyon with his fiery darts, the temptations, slanders, passions, doubts, fears, evil suggestions, everything that can kindle the inflammable passions of body and soul.

Against all these Jehovah his God was his defense. He could control the other nations. He could guard him from all evils. He is the "Lord of hosts," who rules all the hosts of the universe, — the multitude of beings and forces, organized and controlled, — angels, men, stars in the sky, all created beings, all forces and powers of the universe, — all under his control, and organized to do his will, so that he can make "all things to work together for good to them that love him."

COMPARE Elisha's unseen defenders (2 Kings 6: 17) and the twelve legions of angels at Jesus' command (Matt. 26: 53).

COMPARE the Greek shield which "was a large oblong shield, 4 by 2½ feet, and sometimes curved on the inner side." See Xenophon's *Anabasis* I., 8, 9. "Joined together, these large shields formed a wall, behind which a body of troops could hide themselves from the rain of the enemy's missiles." It was thus that the Greek Hoplites and the Roman Legionaries made their almost invincible defense, while marching against an enemy. God is a thousand shields.

GOD HIMSELF IS THE BEST REWARD. The best reward does not consist in God's gifts, but in himself. The child who has his father has infinitely more than any gift his father can give him. He who has God has all things. The love of God is the best reward of love. The favor of God is better than the favor of all other beings in the universe. Communion with God is the best communion of the Spirit. Instead of the child he wanted, God was his friend, and would bring to pass what was needed in his own good time.

So Christ said to his disciples in the storm, "It is I, be not afraid," and to the same disciples again as he left them to do the greatest work ever committed to man, — "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world."

IV. **The Signs and Symbols of the Covenant Promise.** — V. 5. THE PROMISE IN DETAIL. (1) He should be the father of a great nation. (2) God would make him a blessing to all the world. (3) The land of Canaan should be his land and that of his seed forever. (4) His descendants should be in number as the sand of the seashore and as the stars of heaven. (5) God would be his shield and reward. (6) He should have a son who would inherit the promises.

THE CONDITION was faith that led to prompt and entire obedience. But this was a very difficult achievement. Years and years went by and no son was given him. He was almost alone in a heathen land full of all iniquity. The land promised him was occupied by strong and warlike tribes. The fulfilment was far off.

In such circumstances, in all circumstances of difficulty, in all righteous living in a wicked world, men need aids to faith, need sustaining grace shown in visible ways, and God gave these to Abraham, and he gives them to us.

FIRST. THE SYMBOL OF THE STARS. 5. **And he brought him forth abroad.** Out of his tent, so that he could see the stars, showing that this vision was no dream, but a real message from God. **Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them.** In the promise to Noah the rainbow was made a sign, appearing occasionally, but at the very times when fears for the fulfilment of the promise would naturally arise. To Abraham God gives a brighter sign, so that wherever he went the night would speak with thousands of harmonious voices, testifying to the faithfulness of God. God's promise was written on the sky, as every Christian should see written on the nightly heavens:

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

1. These bright worlds were created and are held in their places by divine power. So great is the God who would defend Abraham, so able and willing to keep his promises.

2. The stars never failed. Each night they appeared in their places, and moved unvaryingly in their courses. God's faithfulness in nature was the assurance of his faithfulness to his word given to Abraham.

3. The stars in that climate are brighter than in ours. Professor Hall says that he has known Venus to shine so bright as to cast a shadow. Brighter than the stars, steadier than their flames, shall be the fulfilment of God's promises.

4. There are infinitely more stars in heaven than Abraham could see. God's promises are ever better in their fulfilment than it is possible for us to conceive.

7. And he said unto him, I ^{am} the LORD that ¹ brought thee out of ² Ur of the Chāl'dees, ³ to give thee this land to inherit it.

¹ Gen. 12: 1.

² Gen. 11: 28, 31.

³ Psa. 105: 42; Rom. 4: 13.



Bedouin Tents.

The whole number of the stars seen by the ordinary eye is between five and six thousand, and there are never more than half of them above the horizon at any one time. Fifty to one hundred millions are visible through the telescope. But lately it has become possible to photograph stars fainter than the smallest the eye can see in the best telescope. "There is no sign of any limit to the number of stars. As we pass to fainter and fainter degrees of brightness the stars are found to be more and more numerous. All we can say of the total number is that it must be counted by hundreds of millions." — *Prof. Simon Newcomb, Astronomy for Everybody* (1903). Professor Young, the astronomer of Princeton (1904), says that "the Yerkes telescope probably reaches over 100,000,000 stars." Prof. J. Ellard Gore, F.R.A.S., says (1898), "On a photograph of the great globular cluster Omega Centauri, recently taken in Peru, a count of the stars was carefully made. If the whole sky were as thickly studded with stars as this cluster (which it is not), the total number visible in the whole heavens would be about 1,650,000,000."

SECOND. THE SYMBOL OF THE DUST AND SAND. In Gen. 13: 16 God says that Abraham's seed should be as "the dust of the earth" for number; and in Gen. 22: 17, "as the sand which is upon the seashore." So wherever Abraham looked, at earth or at sky, by day or by night, he would see symbols of God's promise on every side.

THIRD. THE SYMBOL OF CIRCUMCISION. In Gen. 17: 10-14 we find another sign of the covenant, the rite of circumcision, which has ever been the rite of the Jews, as baptism since then has been the sign of the Christian's covenant with God.

FOURTH. THE SYMBOL OF THE CHANGED NAME. In Gen. 17: 5 we have the symbol of a change of his name from Abram (*exalted father*) to Abraham (*father of a multitude*).

FIFTH. THE SYMBOL OF THE BLOOD COVENANT. In the latter part of the lesson for to-day.

GOD'S SIGNS FOR US. God did not cease with Abraham to give signs and symbols in aid of faith. Jesus taught truths continually by means of nature, so that everywhere in nature we have signs of God's truth and promises. The prophets of old did the same. Then we have signs far beyond what Abraham had. We have the experiences of God's people for 4,000 years. We have miracles of conversion. We have the facts of God's guidance. We have instances of God's deliverance. We have all that Christianity has done for individuals and for the world to assure us that he is living and able to help in every time of need. We have baptism and the Lord's Supper for perpetual memorials.

6. And he believed in the Lord. "Neither Greek nor German, much less Latin or English, can furnish any full equivalent to the meaning of these words. *He was supported, he was built up, he reposed as a child in its mother's arms* (such seems the force of the Hebrew word), *in the strength of God*, in God, whom he did not see, more than in the giant empires of earth, and the bright lights of heaven, or the claims of tribe and kindred, which were always before him." — *Stanley*. **And he counted** (reckoned, imputed, set to his account) **it** (his faith) **to him for righteousness.** A right heart that wishes to do every good act and say every good word is as real *righteousness*, if prevented from doing or

8. And he said, ^o Lord GOD, ¹ whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

9. And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a ^{she-goat} ^{she-goat} of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon.

10. And he took ^{unto} him all these, and ² divided them in the midst, and laid each ^{piece one} ^{half over} against ^{another:} ^{the other:} but ³ the birds divided he not.

11. And ^{when the fowls} ^{the birds of prey} came down upon the carcasses, and A'brām drove them away.

12. And when the sun was going down, ⁴ a deep sleep fell upon A'brām; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

¹ Gen. 24: 13, 14; Judg. 6: 17; 1 Sam. 14: 9; Luke 1: 18.

² Jer. 34: 18, 19.

³ Lev. 1: 17.

⁴ Gen. 2: 21; Job 4: 13.

saying, as if the acts were done and the words spoken. Nothing is better, nothing nobler in character, nothing is more truly righteous than a loving, trusting, obedient heart. This is what God most desires in us, and all the "good works" in the world, without this, are nothing. See Jas. 2: 17-24.

V. **The Covenant of Blood.**—Vs. 7-15. 7. I (that make these promises) **am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur.** I delivered you from idolatry, I have prospered you, your whole life is a plan of mine; do you think I will let it fail? Your whole past is a reason for your trusting in me. So David's killing the lion and the bear was the assurance of his victory over Goliath.

8. **Whereby shall I know?** Dillmann says that Abraham's request for further assurance does not agree well with the simple faith which has just preceded. But how could the learned professor have overlooked one of the commonest experiences of human nature, the changes from high experience to depression or to the ordinary level of daily life? Moses, Gideon, Elijah, Hezekiah, John the Baptist, almost every man, have looked for further assurances of faith. "The belief that we are loved does not make us less desirous of being told so. We like to hear the words of affection spoken. It is no sign of doubt, but rather of confidence, that makes a wedding ring, or a visible pledge of unswerving friendship, precious to the one who receives it. God loves to be asked to give tokens of his fidelity. We can go to him in the utmost freedom, and request some confirmation of his promises to us."—*H. C. Trumbull*. All these helps made it possible for Paul to say of Abraham, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God" (Rom. 4: 20).

9. In reply God employed the usages familiar to Abraham. "The cutting up of the carcasses and passing between the pieces was one of the customary forms of contract. It was one of the many devices men have fallen upon to make sure of one another's word. That God should condescend to adopt these modes of pledging himself to men is significant testimony to his love; a love so resolved on accomplishing the good of men that it resents no slowness of faith and accommodates itself to unworthy suspicions."—*Dods*. "As the missionary learns the barbaric dialect, and lays aside his own better and purer language to talk to the Bushmen in their own gutturals, so God for the time being adopts the language which Abram can best understand."—*Abbott*. **Take me an heifer.** One of the usual animals for this purpose. **Of three years old.** Full grown and perfect. The other animals were also sacrificial animals.

10. **Divided them in the midst.** "Each of these animals was cut in two, and each half laid over against the corresponding half, a narrow passage being left between them."—*Green*. **The birds, being small, divided he not,** but probably laid one on each side over against one another.

12. **Lo, an horror of great darkness.** Perhaps of reverent awe at the approach of God, perhaps as a prevision of the long centuries of affliction which were to come on his descendants before the promise could be fulfilled.

THE MEANING OF THIS VISION. We understand the meaning of this vision only when we know the ancient customs of the blood covenant. The rites are known to be very ancient. Its underlying form is that of the mutual transfusion of blood. Dr. Trumbull relates a case where two young men entered into this covenant in this way: "One of the friends

13. And he said unto A'brām, Know of a surety ¹ that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land ^{that is} not their's, and shall serve them; and ² they shall afflict them four hundred years;

14. ^{And} also that nation, whom they shall serve, ³ will I judge: and afterward ⁴ shall they come out with great substance.

15. ^{And} ^{But} ⁵ thou shalt go ⁶ to thy fathers in peace; ⁷ thou shalt be buried in a good old age.

16. ^{And} ⁸ in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity ⁹ of the ^{Am/or-ites} ^{10 is} not yet full.

¹ Ex. 12: 40; Psa. 105: 23; Acts 7: 6.

² Ex. 1: 11; Psa. 105: 25.

³ Ex. 6: 6; Deut. 6: 22.

⁴ Ex. 12: 36; Psa. 105: 37.

⁵ Job 5: 26.

⁶ Acts 13: 36.

⁷ Gen. 25: 8.

⁸ Ex. 12: 40.

⁹ 1 Kings 21: 26.

¹⁰ Dan. 8: 23; Matt. 23: 32; 1 Thes. 2: 16.

took a sharp lancet and opened a vein in the other's arm. Into the opening thus made he inserted a quill through which he sucked the living blood." The same was done by the other. They thus became friends closer than brothers, who must guard, protect, and aid each other to the very utmost. By it each one "gives over one's very self or one's entire possessions to another." It is like a true marriage covenant, "their separate identity is lost in a common life." This covenant is made in several different ways. Sometimes the blood of an animal sacrificed is used as a substitute and type. This must always be in the case of a covenant with God. One form is that described in the verses of the lesson. It also bound Abraham to serve God with all his heart. He was pledged to him. Of course what God could do under his covenant depended upon Abraham's obedience. But he had been tried again and again through a long life, and it was now assured that he would not fail.

COMPARE the covenant of blood in the charnel house in *Lalla Rookh*, and the Scotch Covenanters signing their covenants with their own blood. Such blood-signed covenants are in the museum at Edinboro. Compare also cross dipped in blood in Scott's *Lady of the Lake*.

"When flits this cross from man to man,
Vich Alpine's summons to his clan,
Burst be the ear that fails to heed!
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed!"

FURTHER LESSONS FOR OUR LIVES. (1) God comes to us in our dark times, the times of trial and sickness and loss and danger. These with God in them are a training in faith and character. How sweet the sunshine after the storm, and the assurance that it is always shining on the other side even during the darkness and storm! Character grows by God's encouragements in the trials of our faith, by earnest believing, by confirmations of faith, by religious observances, by the everlasting covenant with God.

(2) The more we grow in faith and character the larger and surer are God's promises to us, because we can see more and be more and do more. We come to the land of Beulah with its wondrous visions,

"Close upon the shining tablelands
To which our God himself is moon and sun."

(3) Our God "is the covenant-making and covenant-keeping God. The Bible is the book of the covenants; from the opening chapter, in which God covenants to give the world and all it possesses to men to subdue and to control it, to the closing chapter, in which he promises to give the water of life freely to whosoever will, it is throughout a book of promises; it is in this respect distinguished from all other books of religion, which even in their claims are but books of law or books of aspiration and desire." — *Lyman Abbott*.

LESSON IX.—March 3.

ABRAHAM PLEADING FOR SODOM.—Genesis 18: 16-33.

READ the Chapter. COMMIT vs. 23-26.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.*—LUKE 18: 1.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Intercessory Prayer.—What principles and practical values do you find from the study of Bible examples and teachings on this subject?

Make a list of the examples presented in the Bible.

Show for whom, by whom, and for what kind of persons such prayer was made.

1. Examples.—Ex. 32: 31, 32; 34: 9; Josh. 7: 8; Judg. 5: 31; 2 Sam. 24: 17; 1 Kings 8: 28, 29, 38, 39; 1 Chron. 29: 18, 19; 2 Chron. 30: 18; Isa. 62: 1; Dan. 9: 17; Luke 23: 34; Acts 7: 60;

Rom. 10: 1; Eph. 1: 16-19; Col. 1: 9; Heb. 13: 20, etc.

2. Teachings.—Num. 6: 23; Job 42: 8; Matt. 5: 44; Eph. 6: 18; Jas. 5: 14-16; 1 John 5: 16, etc.

3. Scripture Allusions to Sodom and Its Destruction.—Deut. 29: 23 (comp. 32: 32); Isa. 1: 9; 3: 9; Jer. 23: 14; 49: 18; 50: 40; Lam. 4: 6; Ezek. 16: 46, 48, 53, 55; Amos 4: 11; Zeph. 2: 9; Matt. 10: 15 (comp. Jude 7; 2 Pet. 2: 6); Matt. 11: 24; Mark 6: 11; Luke 10: 12; 17: 29.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

"Of all the things that a teacher should know how to do," says President Stanley Hall, "the most important, without any exception, is to be able to tell a story."

In this lesson are two chapters of a story, which the teacher should set forth by all the means in his power, in such a way that the facts will be long remembered, and will carry with the story the teaching it naturally conveys.

The map, knowledge of the environment and natural situation, modern examples, will all help to impress the truths which can be reinforced by the moral, visible results of wickedness, and the facts about prayer.

REFERENCE LIBRARY.

On God's visiting men and seeing their works, see A. J. Gordon's *How Christ Came to Church*; Stead's *If Christ Came to Chicago*; and Edward E. Hale's *If Jesus Came to Boston*.

On Eastern hospitality, see Trumbull's *Studies in Oriental Social Life*.

On the angels, see Whately's excellent little volume on *Good and Evil Angels*.

On the Dead Sea, Sodom, and the cities of the plain, see *Biblical World* for 1905, "Explorations in the Dead Sea Valley," by Dr. E. W. G. Masterman; Stanley's *Jewish Church*, 1: 15-40; Prof. G. F. Wright's *Scientific Aspects of Christian Evidences*, "Mediate Miracles"; George Adam Smith's *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*; Prin. J. W. Dawson's *Egypt and Syria*.

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Susan Coolidge's "A Wonderful Thought." Whittier's *Poems*, "The Cities of the Plain." Keble's "The Refuge in Zoar." Cecil Frances Alexander's "Lot and Sodom." Lowell's poem, "Said Christ our Lord I will go and see." Prof. A. P. Peabody's Plutarch's *Delay of Divine Justice*. See the classic story of Baucis and Philemon in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Hawthorne's *Wonder Book*, which has some interesting parallels to this story. Bulwer's description of the destruction of Pompeii.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 23-25; Matt. 7: 11; Isa. 62: 1.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: What a Good Man May Do for a Wicked World.

I. THE LORD TAKES KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE WORLD (Gen. 18: 1-22).

Angel messengers. Illustrations.

II. WHAT THE LORD FOUND IN PALESTINE (vs. 16-21).

(1) As to Abraham. (2) As to Lot. (3) As to Sodom. If Christ came to Chicago; to Boston.

III. ABRAHAM'S PRAYER FOR SODOM (vs. 22-33).

How the righteous can save a city.

IV. THE ANSWER TO ABRAHAM'S PRAYER.

1. By saving Lot.
2. By the destruction of Sodom.

V. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Christian, dost thou see them?"
 "When the weary seeketh rest."

THE SCHOOL OF PRACTICE.

Practise prayer for others every day.
 Be on your guard against sin and bad company.
 Live as if Christ were a guest in your house.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — About 15 years after the last lesson. B. C. 1897, according to Ussher's dating in our Bibles. "1944 B. C. within a

century or two." — *Prof. Willis J. Beecher.*

Place. — The Oaks of Mamre in Hebron. Lot was dwelling in Sodom.

Abraham was 99 years old (Gen. 17: 17, 24). His son Ishmael was 13 years old.

**HOME WORK
AND CLASS DISCUSSION.**

Intercessory prayer.
 The wickedness of Sodom.
 God's knowledge of this world's good and evil.
 God as a guest in our home.
 Why fifty righteous men would save the city.
 Were less than ten too few?
 How Abraham's prayer was answered.
 "Remember Lot's wife."

I. The Lord Takes Knowledge of What Is Going On in His World. — Gen. 18: 1-22. In this story we have an example of one way in which God trained the world to know and to realize that he is in the world and knows and is concerned with all that is going on here. Angels, one of them being "the angel of Jehovah," came in human form to Abraham sitting at his tent door, to bring him a message of assurance, and to see the great wickedness of the cities of the plain.

There is nothing improbable in angels and in God appearing in human form in the early ages of teaching spiritual things to men, any more than in his coming in the human form of Jesus Christ, and for the same reason, namely, to impress indelibly and vividly upon the human race the reality of the presence and power and character of God. They are object lessons teaching a great truth.

Compare the vision of Zechariah, where are represented mounted messengers of God bringing news from every part of the world, showing that God knew all things and was ready to help the people to do their work amid infinite dangers, for the time had come (Zech. 1: 7-17).

It has been a hard lesson to learn, and many even now have not learned it, that God is a living power among the affairs of men, and participates in them; that the word is true. "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?" (Heb. 1: 14), and that he "maketh winds his messengers, his ministers a flaming fire" (Psa. 104: 4).

"Flitting, flitting, ever near thee,
 Sitting, sitting, by thy side,

Like yon shadow, all unweary,
 Angel beings guard and guide."

The classic stories of the presence of gods among men are reminiscences of ancient facts, or attempts to make real the presence of heavenly beings in the world's affairs.

ILLUSTRATION. The classic story of Philemon and Baucis, from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and best told by Hawthorne in his *Wonder Book*, under the title of "The Miraculous Pitcher," has many interesting parallels with this story of Abraham and Sodom. Jupiter and Mercury came down to earth, to a wonderfully fertile valley that was once the bed of a lake, and, being poorly clad, they were treated with great neglect and disrespect by the inhabitants, who snubbed the poor, but welcomed the rich. But a poor couple, Philemon and Baucis, entertained the strangers in the best way they could. As a reward, their pitcher of milk was always full. The next morning the valley had become a lake, which had drowned the village and its wicked inhabitants, while the cottage of Philemon had become a magnificent palace.

ILLUSTRATION. "A French painter has recently made a sensation in Paris by the manner of his work. He fitted up a cab for his studio, and drove about the streets, stopping here and there to make sketches of places and things he saw. People did not see him shut up in his cab, looking out upon them through his little window, and taking his pictures of street scenes and of the nooks and corners and byways of Parisian life. He thus caught all manner of scenes and incidents in the city's hidden ways. He then transferred his sketches to canvas, and put Christ everywhere among them. When the people saw his work, they were startled, for they saw themselves in their every-day life, all their follies and frivolities, and always Christ in the midst. Every kind of actual life is on the canvas and in the heart of it all, — the Christ." — *Westminster Teacher.*

16. And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sôd om: and A'brâ-hâm went with them ¹to bring them on the way.

17. And the LORD said, ²Shall I hide from A'brâ-hâm that ^{thing} which I do:

18. ^{Seeing} that A'brâ-hâm shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be ³blessed in him?

19. For I ^{have known him, & that he will} command his children and his household after him, ^{to the end that he may} and they ^{shall} keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and ^{judgment: to the end} that the LORD may bring upon A'brâ-hâm that which he hath spoken of him.

20. And the LORD said, Because ⁴the cry of Sôd'om and Gô-môr'rah is great, and because their sin is very grievous:

21. ⁵I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me: and if not, ⁶I will know.

¹ Rom. 15: 24; 3 John 6.

⁴ Deut. 4: 9; Eph. 6: 4.

⁷ Deut. 8: 2; Luke 16: 15;

² Psa. 25: 14; John 15: 15.

⁵ Gen. 4: 10; Jas. 5: 4.

2 Cor. 11: 11.

³ Gen. 12: 3; Acts 3: 25; Gal. 3: 8.

⁶ Gen. 11: 5; Ex. 3: 8.



From a Photograph by Wilson.

Abraham's Oak at Hebron.

Traditional place where Abraham entertained the three men under the oak.

ILLUSTRATION. The power of the realized presence of God is well illustrated by the experience of Rev. Dr. A. J. Gordon, of the Clarendon Street Baptist Church in Boston. He had a vision as real as Peter's vision on the housetop at Joppa. He saw Christ sitting in the audience as he preached one Sunday, and began to think how his preaching, the singing, the giving, the system of pew-rents, the church decorations, appeared to his Lord. That presence of his Lord changed the minister and the whole work and atmosphere of his church. See his *How Christ Came to Church*.

"Oh, wonderful thought, that he can know all,
Not only the mighty, but the small;
Not only the Alp, but each flake of its snows!

And he pities and pardons, and loves so well
That you and I in the thought may dwell.

And not be afraid, though we know he knows."

— Susan Coolidge.

II. What the Lord Found in Palestine. — Vs. 16-21.

16. Abraham went with

them. The Oriental way of "speeding the parting guest."

17. Shall I hide from Abraham. Abraham was so true to God that it was safe to let him into his plans.

21. I will go down now, and see. The angels in their human form went to visit

Sodom, a realistic expression of the fact that God knows. So we say, Come, Lord, and visit us, although we know that he is everywhere present.

FIRST. He found Abraham sitting in his tent door among "The Oaks." The three unknown strangers were welcomed with gracious hospitality. "Abraham supposed these strangers to be men; but his course toward them was such that he had no reason for regret when he found they were angels. That is a good way of treating everybody whom we encounter, so that if they should turn out to be angels they would have no reason to complain of us, and we nothing to be sorry for in our treatment of them." — *H. C. Trumbull*. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Heb. 13: 2).

There was one family at least who would have been glad to have Jesus a guest and friend in their home. If we would have him abiding in our home, we must welcome him, live in such a way as he can approve, and make him our intimate friend.

"If Christ should come to-day,
If we could find him on the broad highway,
Or city street,

Oh, would we crowd to touch his garment's hem,
Or kiss his feet?"

SECOND. He found Lot a good man, but imperfect, and on a lower level than Abraham. He had religion enough to make him sad and depressed, but not enough to inspire him to a valiant crusade against wrong and joy in victory, even at the cost of his life. Yet Lot was a kind of hero, in that he did not fall into the moral slime pits of his neighbors.

"Lot, Peter tells us, that righteous man, vexed his righteous soul day by day. The fact that the verb is in the active rather than in the passive voice is worthy of note. The statement is not that the wickedness of Sodom distressed him merely. The expression, whether or not the facts warranted it, is stronger. We are told that he vexed his righteous soul over the wickedness of that wicked city; *i. e.*, that he made himself uncomfortable, if not miserable, by contemplating its want, wretchedness, and sin. He could not be indifferent to what he saw and heard. He was too good a man for that. Because he was righteous his soul was troubled." — *Rev. Edward Day*, in *Biblical World*.

THIRD. He found Sodom reeking in wickedness, (v. 20) **because their sin is very grievous**, and *the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord*. The slime pits of the country were a type of the moral condition of the city. Its wickedness became proverbial (Lam. 4: 6; Isa. 3: 9; Matt. 10: 15; comp. Jude 7; 2 Pet. 2: 6).

ILLUSTRATION. In a sermon on "The Slime Pits of Sodom" the headings are: "(1) 'The Slime Pits of the Streets.' (2) 'The Slime Pits of the Printing Press; Reading that Ensnarers.' (3) 'The Slime Pits of Sensuality: Pleasures that Kill.' (4) 'The Slime Pits of Business: Commercial Dishonesty.' (5) 'The Slime Pits of the Saloon: the Dangers of Gambling and Tippling.'" — *Rev. E. F. See*.

ILLUSTRATION. In 1894, Mr. William T. Stead, the brilliant English reformer, published a book with the title *If Christ Came to Chicago*. Its title and dominant idea was suggested by Lowell's poem "A Parable," beginning

"Said Christ our Lord, I will go and see
How the men my brothers believe in me," —

what they had done with his poor brothers, how they treated the bodies and souls of those he had left in their care.

"Then Christ sought out an artisan,
A low-browed, stunted, haggard man;
And a motherless girl, whose fingers thin
Pushed from her faintly want and sin.

"These he set in the midst of them,
And as they drew back their garment hem
For fear of defilement, 'Lo, here,' said he,
'The images ye have made of me.'"

Mr. Stead represents Christ as going down into the depths of sin in the great city, searching for "the images ye have made of me." He looks into the prisons; he peers into the gambling hells; he finds the haunts of the scarlet woman; he calls at the saloons where men are being transformed into brutes, till one feels as if he were walking with Dante in the seven circles of purgatory, or in the deeper depths of the Inferno. But he seems to fail to see the good, the stars of righteousness shining everywhere in the darkness. God when he came even to Sodom did not so neglect to see the good.

The next year Rev. Dr. Edward Everett Hale wrote a book entitled *If Jesus Came to Boston*. It did not contradict Mr. Stead, but presented the other side of the picture, which is as true of Chicago and New York as it is of Boston. He saw everything that was good,

22. And the men turned ^{their faces} from thence, ¹ and went toward Söd'om: but A'brä-häm ² stood yet before the LORD.

23. And A'brä-häm ³ drew near, and said, ⁴ Wilt thou ^{also destroy} the righteous with the wicked? ^{consume}

24. ⁵ Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou ^{also destroy} and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that ^{are} therein? ^{consume}

25. That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: ^{and} ⁶ that ^{so} the righteous should be as the wicked; that be far from thee: ⁷ Shall ^{shall} not the Judge of all the earth do right?

26. And the LORD said, ⁸ If I find in Söd'om fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their ^{sakes.}

¹ Gen. 19: 1.

² V. 1.

³ Heb. 10: 22.

⁴ Num. 16: 22; 2 Sam. 24: 17.

⁵ Jer. 5: 1.

⁶ Job 8: 20; Isa. 3: 10, 11.

⁷ Job 8: 3; Psa. 58: 11; Rom. 3: 6.

⁸ Jer. 5: 1; Ezek. 22: 30.

the thousand ways and institutions for making men better. Not one person in a thousand of those who go daily to any great city know one-tenth, hardly one-hundredth part, of the efforts made to help our fellow men. Much less do they know the heroes in common life, the martyrs of hospital and home, crucified on invisible crosses, victors over unseen temptations, — these, too, would Jesus set in their midst, and say,

“Lo, here
The images ye have made of me.”

Jesus sees the good and the evil in us, as the angel of Jehovah did when he came to Abraham's tent and to Sodom, but always loving to see the good more than the evil.

III. **Abraham's Prayer for Sodom.** — Vs. 22-33. 22. **And the men turned their faces from thence.** Two of the three strangers to investigate the wickedness of Sodom. This is said to show in vivid colors that God never punishes rashly or unjustly. **Abraham stood yet before the Lord** in the person of the third angel.

23. **And Abraham drew near** in bodily presence and in spiritual nearness, in holy fervency. **Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?** Abraham seems to feel that the only way to save the righteous was to save the wicked. And for the most part good and evil men are so intimately connected that misfortunes which overtake the one involve the other.

24. **Peradventure there be fifty righteous.** Abraham knew Lot was in the city, and he could not help hoping that therefore there must be more. Had Lot's influence been in vain?

25. **Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?** Implying that of course God would do right, although Abraham might not see how. But it was an appeal to God to vindicate his character, and show clearly that what he does is right. The same question still troubles men. Good and bad are often involved in the same catastrophe. The same storm that overwhelms a pirate ship wrecks the *Morning Star* of the missionaries. And yet more certain than the sun in its course is the justice and righteousness of God in all he does. God has no motive for doing injustice to any. There are many things that perplex us now, as they perplexed Job, but if we knew all, if we could see the hidden counsels of God, we would see that our God always does right.

26. **If . . . fifty righteous . . . I will spare all the place for their sakes.** Why? Because fifty men with a living, active piety and zeal could so improve the city morals and character that it would not be necessary to destroy the city to prevent it from infecting the whole region with its deadly vices.

The one deadly enemy to a country is unrighteousness. The ancient civilizations have perished by this poison. Greece and Rome did not fall till they were permeated with unrighteousness. And if ever there comes to pass Macaulay's vision of “some traveler from New Zealand” who “shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, stand on a broken arch of London Bridge to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's,” or on Brooklyn Bridge to sketch the ruins of New York, it will be because of unrighteousness alone.

27. And A'bră-hă'm answered and said, ¹ Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which ^{am} ² ^{but} dust and ashes:

28. ^{Peradventure} ^{peradventure} there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for ^{lack of} ^{lack of} five? And he said, ^{If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy it.} ^{I will not destroy it, if I find there forty and five.}

29. And he spake unto him yet again, and said, ^{Peradventure} there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do ^{it} for the forty's sake.

30. And he said, ^{unto him,} Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: ^{Peradventure} ^{peradventure} there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do ^{it} ^{it} if I find thirty there.

31. And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: ^{Peradventure} ^{peradventure} there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy ^{it} ^{it} for the twenty's sake.

32. And he said, ³ Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: ^{Peradventure} ^{peradventure} ten shall be found there. ⁴ And he said, I will not destroy ^{it} ^{it} for the ten's sake.

33. And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with A'bră-hă'm: and A'bră-hă'm returned unto his place.

¹ Luke 18: 1.

² Gen. 3: 19; Job 4: 19; 1 Cor. 15: 47; 2 Cor. 5: 1.

³ Judg. 6: 39.

⁴ Jas. 5: 16.

God wants all men to be saved, — saved first of all from their sins, for all other salvation depends upon this. He longs for sinners to repent. He desires with all his nature that all men would so live that it may be possible to save them. But they must be saved *from* sin and not *in* sin. Therefore he sent his only begotten Son.

Abraham not only prayed at this time of pleading, but his whole life had been a prayer, — his example, his prosperity in peace and righteousness, his heroism, his generosity, all sustained by prayer, gave power to his plea for Sodom at this time. The way to save the country is by earnest prayer and the use of means. If the whole body of good people prayed as earnestly as Abraham for Sodom, we would not need to exclude foreigners, but to evangelize them; and we would break the power of intemperance.

Note what a few earnest men have accomplished and are accomplishing to-day in reforming our cities, our corporations, our country.

There being some doubt in his mind whether there were fifty righteous men in Sodom, Abraham, with that true charity and goodness which always hopes for the best, takes fresh courage and asks still larger things; he drops to forty-five; then to forty; then to thirty; then to twenty; and finally to ten. It is strange to hear a noted commentator say, "The element in the prayer that jars upon the reader is the bargaining temper that strives always to get the best possible terms." That interpretation "jars upon the reader." Abraham simply was climbing the ladder of hope and faith. With each promise he took courage to ask for more. He grew into larger visions of God's goodness.

The ten were not found in that wicked city. The disease was so deep seated and deadly that only one thing was left, — to put such a wicked city out of existence. The day of judgment had come, as it comes to many a seemingly flourishing sinner, when he has gone on till the bell of doom rings, *Too late, Too late.*

May the young see the doom of many men around them from afar off as Abraham saw the flames of Sodom, and not suffer the doom as the Sodomites did, nor escape so as by fire as Lot escaped.

IV. The Answer to Abraham's Prayer. — **FIRST.** As in all true prayer, it was by praying and the answer to prayer that Abraham became a closer friend of God, became acquainted with him. Thus we become acquainted with others by seeking the same end, counseling together, asking and receiving; as a son with his father.

SECOND. It was answered in the escape of Lot, the one righteous man in the city. He escaped, but lost his home, some of his children, his flock and herds, and all his property. He escaped, a poor, forlorn, seemingly broken-down man. The poorest investment

he ever made was in property in Sodom. He was an illustration of the apostle's appeal in I Cor. 3: 12-15.

Listen to the angel's warning, **STAY NOT IN ALL THE PLAIN.** It is not enough to go outside of the walls of the Sodom of flagrant acts of sin, open crimes, and disreputable and degrading vices; but we must not stay in that region, but keep as far away from sin as possible, from thoughts of sin, from secret sin.

Listen to Christ's warning, **REMEMBER LOT'S WIFE.** Look not back. Make no delay in escaping from sin. Let no regrets at the pleasures of sin stop your onward course to the place of a holy life and heaven.

She did not merely turn her head and look while hastening away, but stopped behind, and the fiery storm and eruption of liquid saline mud overtook her, "and she became a pillar of salt." "Just as some of the victims at Pompeii stumbled in their flight, and were buried under the ashes, which still keep the outline of their figures, so Lot's wife was covered with the half-liquid, slimy mud." "Such a result is not at all incredible, apart from the sacred narrative. An atmosphere heavily charged with the fumes of sulphur and bitumen might easily produce suffocation, as was the case with the elder Pliny in the destruction of Pompeii. And as no dead body would ever decompose on the shores of this salt sea, if left in such an atmosphere it would become incrusting with salt crystals."

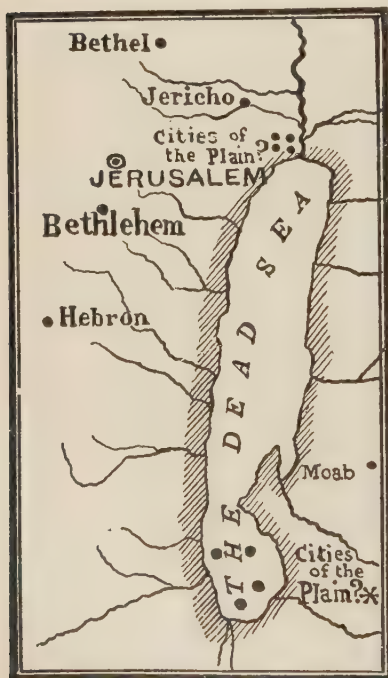
A CLASSIC ILLUSTRATION. We are told in *Virgil* of Orpheus, who went down into Hades, the region of the dead, to recover his lost wife, Eurydice. By his wonderful power of music he was enabled to reach her, and was permitted to bring her back to the upper world, on condition that he should not once look back to behold her, or to see if she were following him. But at length his love overcame his prudence; he looked back, and she vanished forever.

THIRD. Abraham's prayer was answered in the destruction of Sodom, for that was

essential to the promotion of righteousness which Abraham had most at heart, and also essential to the best good of his nephew Lot. God often answers the soul of our prayers while denying the form. When a little child asks his father for the moon, thinking it a bright plaything, the father answers the child's prayer by giving him the plaything which he really wants, and not the moon, which he does not want, for the gift would crush him to death. Giving him the moon would not be answering his prayer.

V. Destruction of the Cities of the Plain. — THE SITUATION. 1. Abraham was at Hebron, an equal distance, about 30 miles, from either end of the Dead Sea.

2. There is a division of opinion as to whether Sodom was situated at the northern end of the Dead Sea or at the southern. Anciently the opinion was almost unanimous that the place was the shallow bay of the southern end, now covered by water. "In this awful hollow, this bit of the infernal regions come up to the surface, this hell with the sun shining into it, primitive man laid the scene of God's most terrible judgment on human sin." — *George Adam Smith*. A few years ago the tendency was to place Sodom in the Ghor at the northern end of the Dead Sea, around the mouth of the Jordan. The modern tendency is to return to the first view, at the southern end. Professor Driver in *Hastings' Bible Dict.* favors the south. *George Adam Smith* is undecided and says, "We can only wonder at the confidence with which all writers dogmatically decide in favor of one or the other." — *Hist. Geog.*, p. 508.



* It is uncertain whether Sodom and the cities of the plain were in the low plain at the north of the Dead Sea or were in the southern shallow bay now covered with water. Both were equally distant from Hebron, the home of Abraham's home.

THE PHYSICAL CAUSE OF THE CATASTROPHE. The region was full of slime or bitumen pits (Gen. 14: 10). The whole region abounds, in a peculiar manner, with bitumen, sulphur, and salt. It is probable that the walls of the city and of the dwellings were permeated and cemented together with bitumen. This is confirmed by the "recently discovered evidence of the use of bitumen in the construction of ancient Jericho."



From a Photograph.

Volcanic Rock Cliffs on the West Shore of the Dead Sea.

"Familiarity with the gas and oil regions of the United States and a recent visit to the still more remarkable oil-fields at Baku, on the Caspian Sea, make the description of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah seem exceedingly natural and lifelike.

"The oil-fields at Baku, on the Caspian Sea, are limited to a few square miles; yet this small area produces as much as all the American fields combined. When a well is sunk a few hundred feet to the subterranean reservoir, the oil comes up with such force that there is no possibility of controlling it. Meanwhile the oil is caught by dams in the open fields.

"The latest news (June, 1905) from Baku reports the occurrence of a wonderful fountain on Plot 7 B.-E., Bibi-Eibat, estimated to have yielded about 147,000 barrels daily for a time. The oil eventually caught fire and caused a great conflagration, in which five fountains were burning simultaneously on one day."

"The region of the Dead Sea is a somewhat similar gas and oil-field, over a deep fissure in the earth leading far down towards its central fires. The description of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah reads almost exactly like that of some of the scenes known to have accompanied the burning of various petroleum wells and of the stores of inflammable substances surrounding them." — *Prof. George Frederick Wright.*

"This event not only demonstrates the reality of miracles, but also serves to illustrate their nature. A miracle is not a violation of natural law, but a use of natural law by One wiser to comprehend and more powerful to use that law than man." And it is wise that it should be so, for thus it best illustrates God's judgments on men and on nations, for they are always connected with the natural effects of a course of sin and crime. The city may have been set on fire by lightnings, and "in a region where earthquakes are still common, there was apparently an outburst of volcanic violence, casting forth blazing bitumen and brimstone" (R. Payne Smith), and thus setting fire to soil and city charged with these inflammable materials. Mr. Kitchen's tale, *The Story of Sodom*, represents the cause to be the vast number of torches in an unusual celebration of idol worship.

The wicked have within them the elements of their own punishment, — their moral natures, memory, conscience, bad character, remorse. These are often dormant till God's outward punishment sets them aflame. As Milton's Satan says, "Myself am hell."

See the description in Whittier's *Poems*, "The Cities of the Plain."

"The warning was spoken; the righteous had gone,
And the proud ones of Sodom were feasting alone. . . .
Hark the growl of the thunder, the quaking of earth!
Woe, woe to the worship, and woe to the mirth!

The black sky has opened, — there's flame in the air, —
The red arm of vengeance is lifted and bare!
Then the shriek of the dying rose wild where the song
And the low tone of love had been whispered along;
For the fierce flames went lightly o'er palace and bower,
Like the red tongues of demons to blast and devour."

LESSON X. — March 10.

ISAAC A LOVER OF PEACE. — Genesis 26 : 12-25.

READ Genesis 20-26. COMMIT vs. 16, 17.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.* — MATT. 5: 9.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Make a chronological list of all the events in the life of Isaac, and note in connection with each one its bearing on his character.

For his Prayerfulness and Piety see Gen.

24: 63 (R. v. margin); 25: 21; 26: 25; Matt. 8: 11; Luke 13: 28.

Prophecies and Promises respecting Isaac, Gen. 17: 16-21; 18: 10-14; 21: 12; 26: 2-5, 24; Ex. 32: 13; 1 Chron. 16: 16; Rom. 9: 7; Gal. 4: 28.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Not a little interest can be given to this lesson by having parts of the story read in character by the members of the class. There are three different scenes which can be so read. One between Abraham, Isaac, and the servants in Gen. 22: 1-12. A second between Abraham and his servant, and a third between Abraham's servant and Rebekah and her family, parts of Gen. 24: 1-28. The teacher can act as chorus, and read the narrative part. Below is an example from a Connecticut teacher reported in the *Sunday School Times*.

"I find that they respond quickly, and need no scenery or costumes to make the picture in their minds clear and definite. For instance, the trial of Paul before Agrippa may be divided into three scenes. Scene one, Festus going over the case with Agrippa; scene two, Paul before Agrippa; scene three, the consultation over the case. We talked over the setting in the palace and the judgment hall, and discussed the various people concerned, with the result that we had for the characters Festus, Paul, Agrippa, Bernice, and boys to represent the soldiers and the Jews. I acted as chorus, and read the narrative part, and the boys read their lines or verses with much expression. They were interested enough to want to repeat the whole thing, changing the parts, which I was very glad to have them do."

HOME WORK
AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The chief particulars in Isaac's life.
His characteristics.
His attitude toward Abraham's sacrificing him.
The value of such a character.
The defects, if any.
Compare the simple with the strenuous life.
What Isaac teaches us about "living peaceably with all men."

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 24, 25; Rom. 12: 10, 18, 21; Eph. 4: 2.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: A Man Who Lived the Simple Life.

I. ISAAC'S BOYHOOD AND EARLY HOME.

Name. Birth. Physical characteristics. The two brothers.

II. HIS PERSONAL CONSECRATION TO GOD (Genesis 22).

His conversion. His life choice.

III. A BEAUTIFUL IDYL OF THE OLDEN TIME (Genesis 24).

Rebekah. Her character. Her marriage story.

IV. A LONG, SIMPLE LIFE OF PEACE (vs. 12-25).

Moving toward the Well of the Living One. Peacemaking.

V. A CHARACTER STUDY OF ISAAC.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — According to our Bible margins Isaac was born about 1896 B. C., and died 1716 B. C., aged 180 years.

Place. — He was born in Beersheba, and spent most of his life in "The South," including Hebron, Beersheba, Gerar, Beer-Lahai-Roi.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

How to treat those who give you occasion to quarrel.
How can you overcome evil with good?
Is this more heroic than fighting?
Is it ever right to fight?

AGELESS HYMNS.

"How sweet, how heavenly is the sight."
 "What grace, O Lord, and beauty shown."

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Most of the books upon Abraham include the life of Isaac.

Whyte's *Bible Characters* is deeply thoughtful on Isaac, but some of his criticisms come too much from his imagination.

Lyman Abbott's discussion of Rebekah's character in *The Women of the Bible* is full of deep insight.

Matheson's chapter on "Isaac the Domesticated," in his *Representative Men*, has deeper insight than Whyte as to the charac-

ter of Isaac, perhaps growing out of his own experience, for he is blind.

F. W. Robertson's *Lectures on Genesis* are suggestive.

LITERARY REFERENCES.

On the sacrifice of Isaac, see Wesley's poem, "Tremendous oracle divine."

Poems, by Cecil Frances Alexander, "Abraham's Sacrifice" and "Isaac in the Field."

Poems, by Arthur Hugh Clough, "Who is this man that walketh in the field?" John Henry Newman's poem on Isaac, "Many the guileless years."

"Isaac Meditating," by Richard Wilton.

I. Isaac's Boyhood and Early Home. HIS NAME. Isaac means *laughter*. "The Cheerful" or "Friendly One" (*Encyc. Bib.*). Three similar explanations are given of the origin of the name, each, according to some of the higher critics, derived from a different original author and tradition; but there is no reason why all should not be true, being from three different points of view. (1) In Gen. 17: 17, "Abraham laughed" at the idea of a son being born to those so old. (2) In Gen. 18: 12, "Sarah laughed" incredulously at the idea of having a son in her old age. (3) In Gen. 21: 6, Sarah laughed in joy and gratitude at the birth of her son.

HIS BIRTH. Isaac was born at Beersheba, B. C. 1896. His father, Abraham, was 100 years old, and his mother, Sarah, 90 years. His half-brother, Ishmael, the son of Hagar, was 13 or 14 years old at this time. Isaac was the heir of the promises made to Abraham in the line of the blessings which were to bless all nations.

HIS PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS. Isaac, as the son of old age, was naturally of weakly constitution, without great physical vigor and that overflow of animal spirits which characterizes a healthy, vigorous youth. He was of a grave and contemplative character, rather than of active initiative, living a peaceful and simple rather than a strenuous life.

But we must be careful not to infer that he was weak in character, as we shall see in our final study and review of his life.

THE TWO BROTHERS. When Ishmael, his half-brother, was 16 or 18 years old, strong, energetic, full of animal spirits, he made fun of his small, weakly, retiring little brother, Isaac. There were several reasons for this in addition to the natural tendency of a strong, energetic youth to tyrannize over his younger, contemplative, and shrinking companions. The newcomer had taken the older boy's place as heir of Abraham's wealth and position. The elder was thrust aside as an inferior, the son of an inferior. It was a downfall for Hagar, too, from the mother of the heir of a wealthy chief to a servant again. Gen. 16: 4 states that Hagar had despised Sarah, and implies that she would join with her son in his intense feelings against Isaac.

The feeling grew so strong that Hagar and Ishmael were sent away to make their own way in the world. Ishmael was old enough to do it if he would. This was the way of peace. It was also the best for both boys.

For note that there are two good ways of training boys, each good according to the character of the boy, but bad if either training is applied to the wrong boy.

For the strong, active young man, inclined to be headstrong and wild, and to depend on his father's wealth to protect him from the results of his escapades, it was well, after the family piety and training had done all they could for him, to be thrown upon his own resources. As Professor Dods says, "The daring and high spirit and quickness to take offense and use violence, which would have wrought untold mischief in a pastoral camp, were the very qualities which found fit exercise in the desert, and seemed there only in keeping with the life he had to lead. And his hard experience at first would, at his age, do him no harm, but good only."

On the other hand, one of Isaac's character needed a different training. The roughness of his elder brother would have crushed his tender spirit for life. He needed the mother-love and father's protection, as a tender plant till it is thoroughly rooted in the soil, and

strengthened to meet wind and storm. Thus under the best influences he grew strong in his inner life.

II. His Personal Consecration to God. — Genesis 22. The last and supreme test of Abraham's faith, by which it blossomed into an eternal example of the strongest faith and obedience, was when the patriarch was commanded to sacrifice his son, the only hope by which the promises to him could be fulfilled.

The spirit of the test was perfect consecration, perfect faith, perfect obedience; "the spirit which offers precious things simply because they are precious." This is the essence of heroism, of patriotism, of love to God, and of love to man. It is not the pains, the losses, the sufferings, the death of the hero, or martyr, or patriot that we love to see, but the spirit that was willing to endure them for a noble purpose.

We have not time in this lesson to consider Abraham's part in this transaction, except to say that the teaching it enforces is not the sacrifice of our children, but the highest faith, the spirit of sacrifice, without injury to our children. Neither do we understand it without realizing Isaac's faith and obedience and heroic character in the transaction.

Abraham lived among idolaters who sacrificed to their idols their choicest treasures, their most beloved, their first-born sons. Æschylus tells how King Agamemnon sacrificed his beautiful daughter, Iphigenia. Tennyson's "The Victim" shows a similar picture in the land of Odin and Thor.

"What would you have of us?
Human life?
Were it our nearest,
Were it our dearest,
We give you his life."

"The king is happy
In child and wife;
Take you his dearest,
Give us a life."

But these were unwilling victims. In Abraham's case Isaac showed the same spirit of consecration and faith as his father did. It was as when parents consecrate their children to missionary work, to patriotism, where the life is offered freely and gladly by the children for the sake of their country and the kingdom of God. It was as when our heavenly Father gave his Son, who offered himself gladly and freely for the saving of mankind.

This event was practically the conversion of the young man Isaac, for he then consecrated himself to God and his service. It was a supreme act of faith. "Believe . . . and thou shalt be saved." "His was the *surrender* of a will," says Matheson, "not the crushing of a will, — there is a great difference between the two. The crushing of a will brings vacancy; the surrender of a will is itself an act of will *power*." The supreme choice of God, the giving one's self to serve and obey him, the believing on Christ, so as to take Him as Lord and Saviour and Teacher, is always an act of heroism, of true manliness, of supreme character.

III. The Part Rebekah Had in Isaac's Life. A Beautiful Idyl of the Olden Time. — Genesis 24. Isaac was not married till he was 40 years old. The story of his courtship is a charming picture, both romantic and sensible. Abraham's chief and confidential steward was sent north to the relatives he had left when he departed from Haran. The test that this Eliezer applied to know whether the maiden he saw was the approved by God was not arbitrary, but an expression of her true character. To draw for ten camels is no easy task, for "the camel is a great drinker. She who would undertake it must needs have good health, as well as boundless good nature." — *Lyman Abbott*. She was beautiful and energetic, full of eager life. She had just the character to be the complement of Isaac's, and to be especially attractive and stimulating to him. She was vivacious, self-reliant, active, obliging, hospitable, courteous, good-hearted, energetic, clever, beautiful. She would keep Isaac from a too contemplative and easy-going life, lest it degenerate into dreamy apathy, while his life would modify her tendencies. Both would be better for the union, and it would be better for the race.

She had some of the shrewd characteristics of her brother Laban and her son Jacob, willing to deceive in order to gain her ends. A man of Isaac's character is often very set in his ways and hard to move, and Rebekah may have felt that her only way to gain what she believed to be certain right purposes was through subtlety.

But on the whole she was a true and blessed wife, as is shown by the fact that in "an age of almost universal polygamy Isaac took no second wife," and "in an age when the home, as we understand it, was scarcely known she was a faithful wife." Dr. Abbott is right in saying that the words concerning them in the marriage service of the Book of Common Prayer, — "That as Isaac and Rebekah lived faithfully together, so these persons may surely perform and keep the vow and covenant between them," — are Rebekah's noblest monument.

12. ^{Then} ^{And} I'saac sowed in that land, and ^{received} ^{found} in the same year ¹ an hundredfold: and the LORD ² blessed him.

13. And the man ³ waxed great, and went forward, and grew ^{more and more} until he became very great:

14. ^{For} ^{and} he had ^{possession} ^{possessions} of flocks, and ^{possession} ^{possessions} of herds, and a great store of servants: and the Philistines ⁴ envied him.

¹ Matt. 13: 8; Mark 4: 8.

² V. 3; Gen. 24: 1, 35.

³ Gen. 24: 35; Psa. 112: 3.

⁴ Gen. 37: 11; Eccl. 4: 4.

IV. A Long, Simple Life of Peace. — Vs. 12-25. Isaac lived with his father in the great encampment of "The Oaks," near Hebron, till Abraham's death, B. C. 1821. He inherited his father's property and position, and continued the same kind of life as a farmer chieftain.

MOVING TOWARDS THE WELL OF LAHAI-ROI, "The well of the Living One that Seeth Me." Geo. Adam Smith and Henderson in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary* place it about 50 miles south (and a little southwest) of Beersheba, on one of the caravan routes to Egypt. Here it was that Ishmael's mother Hagar found a resting-place and a fountain of water after her hopeless wanderings in the desert.

Alexander Whyte thinks that Isaac was attracted to this place, and pitched his tent toward Beer-lahai-roi, because he had heard from his nurse Hagar's lips her wonderful story of this place. "Isaac could never walk round that well, or sit down beside it, or drink out of it, but his tears would come fast for poor, ill-used Hagar and poor, outcast Ishmael, till he wished again that he had never been born rather than that they should both be outcast from their proper home on his account"; and "here God visited Isaac also."

PEACEMAKING. The region where Isaac was now living was on the borders of the great Arabian desert, and was subject to drought. In a time of famine Isaac took his flocks and herds and moved northwesterly 50 or 60 miles to the rich lowlands of the Philistines at Gerar, near the Mediterranean Sea. Gerar is 25 miles a little north of west from Beersheba.

Here Isaac fell into the same sin of falsehood under the same temptation as his father. It is so easy to imitate the faults of good men and soothe the conscience by recalling the same fault as ours in some great and holy man.

12. After this Isaac was greatly prospered in that fertile region. He **received . . . an hundredfold**, "a very unusual yield." — *Dillmann*. Isaac and his Philistine neighbors realized that the cause of his prosperity was because the **LORD blessed him**. His worship of God and his separation from all idol worship made him as "a city set upon a hill."

13. **And the man waxed (grew) great till (v. 14) the Philistines envied him**, and they showed their ill-will (v. 15) by filling up his wells with earth.



From a Photograph by Wilson.

The Old Mosque at Hebron.

Containing the Cave of Machpelah, the most interesting sepulcher in the world; inside are the graves of Abraham, Sarah, Rebekah, Isaac, and Jacob.

15. ^{For Now} all the wells ¹ which his father's servants had digged in the days of A'brā-hām his father, the Phī-līs'tines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.

16. And A-bīm'ē-lech said unto I'saac, Go from us; for ² thou art much mightier than we.

17. And I'saac departed thence, and ^{pitched his tent encamped} in the valley of Gē'rar, and dwelt there.

18. And I'saac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of A'brā-hām his father; for the Phī-līs'tines had stopped them after the death of A'brā-hām: ³ and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

19. And I'saac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of ^a springing water.

20. And the herdmen of Gē'rar ^{4 did strive strove} with I'saac's herdmen, saying, The water ^{is} ours: and he called the name of the well ^b E'sēk; because they ^{strove contended} with him.

21. And they digged another well, and ^{they} strove for that also: and he called the name of it ^c Sit'nah.

22. And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it ^d Rē-hō'both; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall ^b be fruitful in the land.

¹ Gen. 21: 30.

² Ex. 1: 9.

³ Gen. 21: 31.

⁴ Gen. 21: 25.

⁵ Gen. 17: 6; Ex. 1: 7.

^a Hebrew, *living*.

^b That is, *Contention*.

^c That is, *Enmity*.

^d That is, *Room*.

16. And Abimelech. A Philistine king at Gerar. Go from us. Because there was likely to be trouble from the Philistines, whose temper was against prosperous foreigners growing rich in their country. A modern example is the expulsion of the Jews from several countries of Europe for the same reasons.

17. Isaac departed thence. Isaac was a man of peace. Though stronger than his enemies, he yielded his rights, for the sake of peace; and he found that "the meek shall inherit the earth." Pitched his tent. "Encamped," — referring sometimes to military encampment and to a more settled habitation than the common term for nomadic tenting.

Then he moved up the valley of Gerar into less fertile regions, but nearer to his old Beersheba home. The peacemaking cost him something.

18. Digged . . . wells . . . called their names after the names by which his father had called them. They were the good old names of blessed memories. His father had chosen wisely the best places. The memory of Abraham was potent with Isaac. He loved to give his father credit. "Still was he offering himself to a parent's service."

It is always wise to choose the best even if it is old, rather than an inferior new simply because it is new. The ageless truths are the best, though we may have to restore them from accumulations of foreign material with which the Philistines have encumbered them.

19. Digged in the valley. A new well was now dug by Isaac's servants. This was Isaac's right. Of springing water. Hebrew, *of living waters*; i. e., of running water, rare, and unusually precious for its cool freshness, and for being perennial.

20. The herdmen of Gerar did strive, etc. The Philistines claimed the well because it was in their country, and Isaac's herdmen claimed it because they discovered and dug the well. Called the name of the well Esek. That is, *contention* or *strife*.

21. Another well . . . Sitnah. Hatred, *spitefulness*. From the same root with *Sitnah* is derived Satan, an *adversary*, or *hater*.

22. Another well . . . they strove not. "Isaac left the valley." All these were in the valley of the stream that flows by Gerar into the Mediterranean. Isaac followed up the stream till he came to the source of one of its branches at Rehoboth, 30 miles to the southeast.

23. And he went up from thence to Bē'er-shē'ba.

24. And the LORD appeared unto him the same night, and said, ¹ I ^{am} the God of A'brā'hām thy father: ² fear not, for ³ I ^{am} with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant A'brā'hām's sake.

25. And he ⁴ builded an altar there, and ⁵ called upon the name of the LORD, and pitched his tent there: and there I'saac's servants digged a well.

¹ Gen. 17: 7; Ex. 3: 6;
Acts 7: 32.

² Gen. 15: 1.
³ Vs. 3, 4.

⁴ Gen. 12: 7.
⁵ Psa. 116: 17.

23. He went up from thence to Beer-sheba, 18 miles northeast of Rehoboth. This was the old paternal home. Many memories of his father and mother, his brother, his marriage, and his own early life clustered around the old homestead and hallowed it.

24. The Lord appeared unto him. In what way we know not, but probably as in other appearances to his people. The God of Abraham. "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." "Therefore he is assured that Abraham is not lost by death, nor God's covenant with him lost." **Fear not.** As a man of peace, unwilling to strive or fight, he may have feared that his enemies would take advantage of his good disposition, and injure him. God bids him to have no fear so long as he is serving God and doing right. He is assured against any doubts or fears he may have had, or any feeling of unworthiness from his having so different a career from his father, that the covenant with Abraham, with all its blessings, is continued to him the son and heir.

HIS PERMANENT RESIDENCE. 25. (1) He builded an altar there. For sacrifice and worship. He had the permanent institutions of religion, with the thought of forgiveness, consecration, prayer, and worship. (2) And pitched his tent there. Made a permanent abode for his household. (3) Digged a well. A perennial supply. It was in addition to the one Abraham dug. "Two wells still exist at this place, attesting the correctness of the record." — *Murphy*. Here Abimelech came, led on, doubtless, by the admirable character of Isaac, and proposed a covenant between them, which was sealed by an oath. Hence the place renewed its name "Shebah," an oath, or "Beersheba," well of the oath, a sign of permanent peace with his neighbors.

THE MAN OF PEACE. The only way to overcome evil is with good. Pulling up weeds never, alone, makes a good garden. It is true that so long as there is evil in the world there will be conflict and commotion.

Peacemaking does not mean that we are not to oppose that which is wrong or disturb the quiet of corruption and crime. Nothing is settled till it is settled right. There can be no peace to the wicked. Our first duty, therefore, is, at any cost of disturbance, to get things where peace is possible. But resenting injuries, anger, retaliation are not the means by which this good can be obtained. To fight evil with evil is simply to make two evils instead of one. And both evils are increased by the processes. Even if the good fails in overcoming the evil in others, yet it is itself strengthened and increased by the effort, and therefore the proportion of good to evil is increased. Like kindles like, as fire kindles fire. The tendency of good is to awaken the good in other souls. The sunlight brightens and beautifies whatever it shines on. Every particle of dust even reflects the light. This is the divine way. God's love in Jesus Christ is the transforming power in the world.

V. A Character Study of Isaac. — There are two kinds of men useful as examples.

FIRST. There are those who do heroic things, great, grand, and visibly glorious, who are ideals set before us, mostly far, far beyond our hope of attaining, but yet visible illustrations of spiritual greatness and heroism, without which every life and the whole world would be poor indeed.

SECOND. There are those who live our common, every-day life with such nobleness, such sweet and holy spirit, doing everything from the highest motives, "living," as Starr King once said, "all the beatitudes daily," that they are a perpetual inspiration to us every day of our lives. They touch our character, not in special emergencies, but in every act of every day.

"Like to the sunlight, — gladdening, brightening all,
Quiet as dew, which no man heareth fall,
So let thine influence be."

Jesus Christ embodies both qualities. His coming to save, his death on the cross, and, in a sense, all between were the utmost heights of heroism and self-sacrifice. But his

daily life was, in many ways, like that of the ordinary man brought up to the perfect ideal. And this kind of life, touching our daily needs and cares and duties, was essential to our best welfare.

Now, Isaac was an example of daily living such as belongs to us, filled with the spirit which should pervade, inspire, and elevate our daily lives. His life was uneventful, almost monotonous. He has been called "the Wordsworth of the Old Testament." We find in him "those refined, sensitive, pleasant, passive virtues which make tender and helpful the home relations, and which are the grace of all social intercourse." "Eventful lives train large, commonplace, taking, but rough, elements of character." "The uneventful lives are the spheres in which are trained the fine, delicate, gentle, divinest elements of character . . . in such silent fashion as that in which the soft breath of spring wakens the flower-music of the earth." — *Robert Tuck in Revelation by Character.*

"July was in his sunny heart,
October in his liberal hand." — *Emerson.*

Rev. Dr. George Matheson, the famous Edinboro preacher, is himself blind, like Isaac in his old age, and, therefore, has an insight into Isaac's experience which few can have, and his conception of Isaac is well worth attention. "A willing sacrifice," "voluntary obedience, a surrender of the will," is the keynote of his character. "He has submitted to self-effacement for the sake of his family." "Isaac is the bird that is prevented from soaring by the requirement of its nest." He is *shut in* to commonplace duty.

It is a delusion to think that "a curtailed sphere is a curtailed energy." "My own opinion is that there is nothing which demands so much religious strength as the sense of a shut gate." It is easy to hear God's voice commanding you to go *out*, but it needs faith to recognize it when it bids you go *in*.

"Isaac exchanged the firmament for a farmyard. . . . Is this the occupation for a hero? It does not seem so, but if you look deeper into this dusty soil you will find diamonds,—the most sparkling diamonds in Isaac's life." "He that can empty himself of his dearest desire has reached the acme of self-abnegation." "To me the figure of Isaac suggests rather one of Cromwell's Ironsides than one of earth's weaklings." "It is a tribute to *feminine* strength, bearing strength, patient strength."

"And is it not a sense of this feminine type of greatness which has constrained the artist in Genesis to give to woman a place so high? Nowhere is the Bible so modern as in its opening pages." "An impression that the time would come when the virtues of the valley would be hailed as the virtues of the hill . . . the enthroning among the patriarchs of a distinctly feminine soul—a soul whose greatness lay in self-denial, and whose majesty was his willingness to take the lower room." — *Matheson, Representative Men.*

"The blessings of her quiet life
Fell on us like the dew,
And good thoughts where her footsteps pressed
Like fairy blossoms grew."

— *Whittier.*

We are apt to underestimate the value of commonplace, uneventful lives. On the contrary, we should "thank God for putting some very ordinary, commonplace men in his gallery of Scripture portraits."

It is as true of men as of nations, that the great forces often move and work silently, and often unrecognized,—

"The times of quiet and unbroken peace,
Though for a nation times of blessedness,
Give back faint echoes from the historian's page."

A simple crime or accident will occupy more space in the newspapers than a whole lifetime of holy and peaceful living. So in the ordinary histories of the Wars of the Roses in England one would scarcely gain a hint of the progress and development of the people, while the leaders were busy with fighting.

"Whate'er of folly, shame, or crime
Within thy mighty bounds transpires
With speed-defying space and time
Comes to us on the accusing wires;

While all thy wealth of noble deeds,
Thy homes of peace, thy votes unsold,
Thy love that pleads for human needs,
The wrongs redressed, but half is told!"

— *Whittier.*

ILLUSTRATION. The unseen powers of the world are far mightier than the visible manifestations of power we see around us. In a single drop of water there is electricity enough to kill a man. The rays of sunshine will lift up the great iron Menai bridge.

ILLUSTRATION. "Passions may rage around a tea-table which would not have become men dashing at one another in war chariots; and evolutions of patience and temper must be performed at the fireside, worthy to be compared with the retreat of the ten thousand." The great battles of life, the Marathons, the Waterloos, the Gettysburgs, are often fought on the silent battlefields of the heart.

LESSON XI. — March 17.

JACOB AND ESAU. — Genesis 27: 15-23, 41-45.

READ Gen. 25: 27-34; 27: 1-45. COMMIT v. 22.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but they that deal truly are his delight.* — PROV. 12: 22.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Look up all the Scriptures which give light upon the history and character of each of these two brothers, both in the New Testament and the Old; and make lists of the qualities you find descriptive of each one. NOTE especially the lessons derived from

1. Despising the birthright: Heb. 12: 16, 17.

2. Jacob chosen instead of Esau: Rom. 9: 7-14; Mal. 1: 2; Obadiah 17-19; Jer. 49: 8.

3. Our birthright: Rom. 8: 14-17; John 3: 16; Rev. 22: 1-5.

4. Selling our birthright: Matt. 16: 26; 19: 16-22; 27: 3-8; Mark 8: 37; Rev. 18: 8.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

A large part of this chapter is in dialogue form, and may be read in character by the members of the class, the teacher, as in the last lesson, reading the narrative part. Begin with the dialogue in Gen. 25: 27-34.

One of the class can point out the various places connected with the life of Jacob and Esau.

Two others can give brief essay or verbal descriptions, contrasting the characters of Esau and Jacob; one describing Jacob, the other Esau.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Delitzsch's and Dods' commentaries are very good. F. W. Robertson's *Notes of Sermons on Genesis*. Matheson's *Representative Men*. Stanley's *Jewish Church*, 1: 58, etc. Monroe Gibson's *Ages Before Moses*. F. W. Robertson's *Sermons*, Series V. Geikie's *Old Testament Characters*. Alexander Whyte's *Bible Characters*, "Esau," "Jacob," "Rebekah."

LEARN BY HEART.

V. 22; Heb. 12: 16, 17; Rom. 8: 16, 17.

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Keble's *Christian Year*, Second Sunday in Lent, on "Esau's selling his birthright."

"Isaac's Blessing on Jacob," by J. and C. Wesley.

"Rebekah Parting with Jacob," by Emily Taylor.

Francis Quarles' *Divine Fancies*, "Esau." Tennyson's "Foolish Virgins," "Too Late."

Longfellow's "Ladder of St. Augustine." George Thomas Coster's "Esau at the Grave of Isaac."

AGELESS HYMN.

"How sweet and heavenly is the sight."

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

What is your birthright?

Do you see any ways in which you may barter it?

Do you find any cases where you are tempted to do good things in a wrong way?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Climbing to Success by the Wrong Stairway.

I. THE TWO BROTHERS.

Character studies of Esau and Jacob.

II. SELLING THE BIRTHRIGHT FOR A BOWL OF POTTAGE (Gen. 25: 29-34).

The birthright.
Our birthright.
Selling our birthright.

III. THE BIRTHRIGHT GAINED BY FRAUD (Gen. 27: 1-40).

Good things gained in a wrong way.
The guilt of the transaction.

IV. THE FRUITS AS SHOWN IN THE TWO CAREERS (vs. 41-45).

Results to Esau.
Effects of Jacob and Rebekah.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — According to our Bible margins, Esau sold his birthright about B. C. 1805, 16 years after the death of Abraham. Jacob gained possession of it 25 years later, B. C. 1780.

Place. — Jacob's early home was at Beersheba, in The South Country. He fled to Padan Aram, at Haran, near the head waters of the Euphrates, 280 miles northeast of Damascus.

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Characteristics of Jacob.

Characteristics of Esau.

Which were the best characteristics, susceptible of the greatest development for good?

What was the birthright?

Why was Esau "profane" for selling it?

Why was Jacob so anxious for it?

Was his seeking a good thing in a wrong way a mark of a weak faith?

Can you give any modern examples of this?

I. The Two Brothers. The two brothers were twins, but Esau was the elder. They were born and reared at Beersheba. They were as different from one another as were Isaac and Rebekah, but with a difference. Esau, in whom Rebekah's nature was emphasized, was the favorite of Isaac, while Jacob, who grafted the shrewdness and business sharpness of his mother's family upon the home-loving and religious and thoughtful nature of his father, was the favorite of Rebekah.

ESAU means "Hairy," but to this was added the name Edom, "Red," both on account of his ruddy color and the red pottage for which he sold his birthright. Delitzsch says that innumerable names have a similarly accidental origin. It was not uncommon among our Indian tribes.

"Esau was a sportsman, boisterous, wild, clumsy." Alexander Whyte thus pictures him: "Esau was full of the manliest interests and pursuits. He was a proverb of courage and endurance and success in the chase. . . . He had an eye like an eagle. His ear never slept. His arrow never missed the mark. A prince of men. A prime favorite both with men, women, and children. All the time an animal more than a man." "A gentleman by birth, but a brute by choice." He grew to be a worldly, sensuous, adventurous, but withal a brave, good-natured, and jovial man, ready for any sport or pleasure, no matter at whose cost, and to break, in a jolly, rollicking way, every commandment in the Decalogue. He was prosperous in his chosen way, and became the head of a tribe, the moral ancestor of the Bedouin tribes of to-day.

BUT NOTE there were possibilities of great good in Esau, if he had been willing to choose to make the most out of his opportunities. He could not become like Abraham or Isaac or Jacob, but he could have been a noble, useful Esau; an attractive man, using his strength to defend virtue and innocence; his courage, energy, and skill to war against all evils, and to defend his home from enemies; his healthy open-heartedness and good-nature to attract men to the true religion and pure morality. What a character he might have ripened into, doing a work for the kingdom of God among the tribes that Jacob could not do.

The poet is right, at least largely right, when he says

"You may grind them both in the self-same mill,
You may bind them heart and brow;
But the poet will follow the rainbow still,
And the other will follow the plow."

But the poet can make his visions uplift and not debase his fellow men, and the plowman can live a holy life that is a perpetual blessing, if each one will.

Esau failed because, though brought up in a religious atmosphere, he chose to go with bad companions and marry heathen wives. His fatal steps were not the passionate impulse of a moment. "No man sells his birthright on the spot. He who sells his birthright sells it many times in his heart before he takes it openly to the market. He belittles

it and despises it and cheapens it, at any rate to himself, before he sells it so cheaply to another." So "Esau had hunted for years with the brothers of Judith and Bashemath. He had eaten and drunken and danced with the Hittite inhabitants of the land. He had sacrificed and sworn and vowed to their false gods of the fields and of the streams and of the unclean groves — till at last, in open defiance of all decency and religion, he brought home two Canaanite wives to his father's covenanted camp." — *Alexander Whyte*.

"Had thine given place but to thy Father's will
'Thou 'adst had thy Birthright; and thy blessing still.'"

— *Francis Quarles*.

JACOB means "the catcher by the heel," "a supplanter." He lived at home, a plain, domestic man, a large farmer, with business proclivities and skill. He inherited from his mother the genius and insight which enabled him to gain his ends by adroit skill, by diplomacy, by ingenious cleverness, from those who would overcome him by superior physical force. Naturally this talent was cultivated by his living with his robust and physically overbearing brother. He knew by instinct the best end of a bargain. He was a natural-born business man, a splendid talent when joined with conscientious integrity. The selling and buying of the birthright when both were young men, 32 years old, is an illustration of their characters.

But his life was not prosaic. He inherited from his father the promises of God. He lived in the presence of visions and ideals. Joseph the Dreamer was his own son. He prized the promised birthright. "Esau," says Matheson, "is the man of the present; Jacob is the man of the future."

Jacob's career was a growth and development. We see his choice of the better things gradually overcoming his faults and imperfections. His progress is slow and difficult, with zigzag motions, with reactions, like the chilly days and snowstorms of spring, but it is moving on toward the summer harvests and autumn fruits.

"Heaven is not reached by a single bound,
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round.

"We rise by things that are under feet;
By what we have mastered of good and gain;
By the pride deposed and the passion slain;
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet."

His life is well summed up by Stanley in *The Jewish Church*: "In Jacob and Esau the good and evil are so mingled that at first we might be at a loss which to follow, which to condemn. But yet, taking the two from first to last, how entirely is the judgment of Scripture and of posterity confirmed by the result of the whole! The mere impulsive hunter vanishes away light as air. The substance, the strength of the chosen family, the true inheritance of the promise of Abraham, was interwoven with the very essence of the character of the 'plain man, dwelling in tents,' steady, persevering, moving onward with deliberate, settled purpose, through years of suffering and of prosperity, of exile and return, of bereavement and recovery. On the one hand, fickleness, unsteadiness, weakness, want of faith, and want of principle ruin and render useless the noble qualities of the first; and, on the other hand, steadfast purpose, resolute sacrifice of present to future, fixed principle purify, elevate, turn to lasting good even the baser qualities of the second."

ILLUSTRATION. God sees the possible blessings in our natures, and seeks to make these possibilities realities. It is like the vision of the sculptor who sees the possible statue in the marble, as Michael Angelo once said of a piece of beautiful marble, outwardly defiled and thrown one side, "I see an angel there, and must get him out."

ILLUSTRATION. "Two friends met the other day after several years' separation. The greetings over, one said: 'Are you making progress?' 'Well,' said the other with a smile, 'I'm making character.' There was no need to say more. The reply was a flash-light."

II. **Selling the Birthright for a Bowl of Pottage.** — Gen. 25: 29-34. The young men grew up together till they were about 32 years old, when an incident occurred small in itself, but with eternal consequences.

THE BIRTHRIGHT. "The first-born is the head of the patriarchal family, and the right of the first-born includes the representative privileges derived from this exalted position." — *Delitzsch*.

"Esau was, by right of birth, the head of the family, its prophet, priest, and king; and no man can renounce such privileges, except as a sacrifice required by God, without 'despising' God, who gave them. But more than this: he was the head of the *chosen* family; on him devolved the blessing of Abraham that, 'in his seed all families of the earth should be

15. And Re-běk'ah took ^{the} ¹ goodly raiment of ^{her eldest son} E'sau' ^{her elder son,} which ^{were} ^{were} with her in the house, and put them upon Jā'cob her younger son :

16. ^{And} she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck :

¹ V. 27.

blessed'; and, in despising his birthright, he put himself out of the sacred family, and so became a 'profane person.' His sin must not be overlooked in our indignation at the fraud of Jacob, which, as we shall see presently, brought its own retribution as well as its own gain." — *Wm. Smith.*

One day Esau, returning from a long hunt, ravishingly hungry, found Jacob cooking a wholesome and appetizing dish of yellowish-red lentiles. "Give me some of that red, that red!" eagerly cried the famished hunter.

The crafty Jacob, instead of sharing his meal with the brother, who had, doubtless, often given him venison, drove a hard bargain, and Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. And knowing well Esau's fickleness, Jacob made him take a solemn oath. "I am dying of hunger," said the elder brother with characteristic exaggeration, "and what is a birthright to me?"

Alexander Whyte tells the story thus: "Everybody knew that Esau's birthright was for sale. Isaac knew, Rebekah knew, and Jacob knew, and Jacob had for a long time been eyeing his brother for a fit opportunity." The opportunity came when the ravenous Esau asked for some of his pottage. "As much as you are able to eat, Esau; only, say that you toss me to-day your worthless birthright," said Jacob. 'Take it and welcome,' said Esau, 'and much good may it do you. It has never been worth a haunch of venison to me. You may have it, and my oath on it on the spot, for a good dish at once, and be quick, of your smoking pottage. Take it and let me be done with it.'"

OUR BIRTHRIGHT. As children of God we all have a birthright far more valuable than Jacob or Esau could dream of. We have promises beyond the range of their highest imaginations. "The child in a Christian home has for his birthright the Sabbath day, and the Lord's table, and the society of the best people in the city, and first a youthhood, and then a manhood, of purity and piety and the service of Christ in His church: 'A birthright of truth and honesty and honor and chastity.'" — *Alexander Whyte.*

We are heirs of God, of his character, his love and care, his heavenly home, his joy and peace. Our souls may be temples of the Holy Ghost, full of "the desirable things of all nations." We have an "inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away"; "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

SELLING OUR BIRTHRIGHT. Many a man sells his birthright for a mess of pottage, — his character, his conscience, his usefulness, heaven itself, for pride, for worldly gain, for honor, for pleasure.

"We barter life for pottage; sell true bliss
For wealth or power, for pleasure or renown;
Thus, Esau-like, our Father's blessing miss,
Then wash with fruitless tears our faded crown."
— *Keble.*

III. The Birthright Gained by Fraud. — Gen. 27:1-40. About 25 years (or, as some think, 45) pass away. Very probably Esau had forgotten his bargain, or, at any rate, had no intention of carrying it out. But Isaac, feeling the infirmities of age, though he lived many years after this, wished to devolve the care of his family upon his eldest son, and proposed at a feast to bestow upon him the birthright blessing, which would have made Esau the head of the family. Jacob remembered his purchase, and Rebekah, the prophecy. Jacob was her favorite son. The two were afraid that the desired boon was slipping away from them. They did not trust God, but took the matter into their own hands and conspired together to palm Jacob off upon his blind and aged father as Esau, the eldest son.

15. The goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau. "The better clothes which he used on festive occasions . . . which had the odor of the fields about them." — *Dillmann.*

This was the better to deceive the blind Isaac, who yet had a good sense of smell.

16. Skins of the kids of the goats. These were put on his hands and his neck to imitate the rough and hairy skin of Esau, if Isaac should feel of him.

17. ^{And} she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the hand of her son Jā'cob.

18. And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here ^{am} I; who ^{art} thou, my son?

19. And Jā'cob said unto his father, I ^{am} E'sau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, ¹ that thy soul may bless me.

20. And I'saac said unto his son, How ^{is it} that thou hast found ^{it} so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the LORD thy God ^{brought it to me.} ^{sent me}

21. And I'saac said unto Jā'cob, Come near, I pray thee, that I ² may feel thee, my son, whether thou ^{be} my very son E'sau or not.

22. And Jā'cob went near unto I'saac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice ^{is} Jā'cob's voice, but the hands ^{are} the hands of E'sau.

¹ V. 4.² V. 12.

17. Then Rebekah imitated the venison stew which Esau was to prepare on his return from his hunting expedition.

19, 22. **Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn.** But Isaac doubted because: (1) It was so soon after Esau's departure that there was hardly time for him to have found a deer and returned; and this necessitated another lie. (2) His voice did not sound like Esau's. Hence, Isaac said those words which have become a proverb of deceit, **The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.**

Thus deceived, Isaac gave the birthright blessing to Jacob.

NOTES ON THIS TRANSACTION. FIRST. Jacob inherited the blessing because he was best fitted for it, or rather he had within him the best possibilities which could be trained into fitness. Hence, God had ordained that the elder should serve the younger (Gen. 25: 23).

SECOND. GOOD THINGS OBTAINED IN A WRONG WAY. God in no sense approved of the way in which Jacob obtained the birthright. It seemed to Rebekah and Jacob as if God's promises were about to fail, and they must do something to bring the right thing to pass, even if they did a wrong in accomplishing it. But did God need Jacob's sin in order to carry out his plans? God forbid! The work would have been done infinitely better if Jacob had gained his birthright in God's way and God's time. His sin arose not from faith, but from the imperfection of his faith. "It was virtually the sin of blaming God for forgetting his promise, or of accusing him of being unable to perform it; so that they, Rebekah and Jacob, had, forsooth, to take God's work out of his hands, and show him how it ought to be done."—*Marcus Dods*.

AN EXAMPLE of the contrary plan was shown by David when he refused to kill King Saul, although the kingdom had been promised to him. He waited God's time, and refused to do evil that good might come of it. (See 1 Sam. 24: 1-7.)

Another example, which Jacob had before him, was that of his grandfather Abraham in his sacrifice of Isaac.

THIRD. (1) We must judge of the guilt of this transaction, not by our light, but by theirs. For deceit was not looked upon then as a great evil, especially with a good motive and in a good cause. (2) The birthright had been designated by God as belonging to Jacob. (3) Esau had sold his right, and Jacob had acquired it. (4) Esau had practically renounced his privilege, not only by the sale, but by marrying heathen wives from the great Hittite nation. (5) By character and marriage Esau was wholly unfitted to be the father of the faithful and the inheritor of the promises. (6) We must unqualifiedly condemn this deceitful transaction, as God condemned it by the many sorrows which flowed from it.

FOURTH. MODERN APPLICATIONS. It is a very common thing to seek to do good things in a wrong way. "We will take things before the time. The vineyard is yours, every cluster of grapes is yours; but do not touch one atom of fruit till the sun has wrought out his ripening ministry upon it. We may not touch even things that are our own until

23. And he discerned him not, because ¹ his hands were hairy, as his brother E'sau's hands: so he blessed him.

41. And E'sau ² hated Jā'cob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and E'sau said in his heart, ³ The days of mourning for my father are at hand; ⁴ then will I slay my brother Jā'cob.

42. And these words of E'sau her elder son were told to Re-bēk'ah; and she sent and called Jā'cob her younger son, and said unto him, Behold, thy brother E'sau, as touching thee, doth ⁵ comfort himself, *purposing* to kill thee.

43. Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Lā'ban my brother ⁶ to Hā'ran;

44. ^{And until} tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away;

45. ^{until} thy brother's anger turn away from thee, and he forget ^{that that} which thou hast done to him: then I will send, and fetch thee from thence: why should I be ^{deprived also bereaved} of you both in one day?

¹ V. 16.

² Gen. 37: 4, 8.

³ Gen. 50: 3, 4.

⁴ Obadiah 10.

⁵ Psa. 64: 5.

⁶ Gen. 11: 31.

the right time comes."—*Jos. Parker*. We are tempted to gain riches or honor by dishonest, underhanded ways; to maintain our rights by trickery or deceit.

FIFTH. ESAU'S RELATION TO IT. Esau received a certain blessing, one for which he was fitted. All his bitter tears could not give to him the birthright he had despised and sold. "He had no right, divine or human, to the inheritance. God had never said that his possession should go to the oldest, and had in this case said the express opposite. Besides, inconstant as Esau was, he could scarcely have forgotten the bargain that so pleased him at the time, and by which he had sold to his younger brother all title to his father's blessings. Jacob was to blame for seeking to win his own by craft, but Esau was more to blame for endeavoring furtively to recover what he knew to be no longer his."—*Dods*.

This shows that his repentance was not sincere, not true repentance. There was no godly sorrow over his sin, no confession, only regrets over his loss. Therefore "Esau found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully, with tears." "Do not mistake that, as if it meant that Esau, wishing to repent, could not. Clearly, the repentance he sought for was his father's, not his own; repentance in the sense of change of purpose; and all his tears could not alter that purpose, or change the word once passed. He had sowed to the flesh, and expected to reap both the joys of the flesh and the peace of the spirit. This may not be. We reap as we have sown."—*Robertson*.

IV. The Fruits as Shown in the Two Careers. — Vs. 41-45. FIRST. HATRED. 41. Esau hated Jacob. Jacob's wrong-doing kindled the fires of hate, where right-doing would have awakened love. The hatred prompted murder, for Esau planned to kill Jacob as soon as his father died. Well did John write, "He that hateth his brother is a murderer" (1 John 3: 15).

SECOND. BANISHMENT FROM HOME. His mother sent Jacob away, giving as a reason to Isaac that his son ought to marry one of his kindred. He gained his object, but the wrong way of gaining it mingled the draught of good with many a tear of bitterness,—"trouble in the flesh; vanity and vexation of spirit. He had to flee from his father's house; never to see his mother again; to wander over the deserts to kinsmen, who cheated him as he had cheated others; to serve Laban for twenty-one years; to crouch miserably, in fear and trembling, as a petitioner for his life, before Esau whom he had wronged, and to be made more ashamed than ever by finding that generous Esau had forgiven and forgotten all; then to see his daughter brought to shame; his sons murderers, plotting against their own brother, his favorite son; to see his gray hairs going down with sorrow to the grave; to confess to Pharaoh, after one hundred and twenty years of life, that few and evil had been the days of his pilgrimage."—*Charles Kingsley*.

THIRD. REBEKAH lost her favorite son, for, so far as we know, she never saw Jacob again; and Esau was not of a nature to be a comfort to her; and her husband was weak and blind.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. Never, NEVER, NEVER sell your birthright for any inducement whatever, nor make light of religious things, or conscience, or righteousness.

2. Never, NEVER, NEVER do wrong that good may come.

"Do what is right,
Right things in great and small,
Then, though the sky should fall,

Sun, moon, and stars, and all,
You shall have light."

ILLUSTRATION. As I am writing this there come these words concerning a successful Christian merchant who has just passed away: "That he was a successful money-getter is, in itself, of small consequence; the country is full of successful money-getters; but that he should be *credited with making a great fortune by methods which taught men the business virtues, instead of the business vices, is of real moment.*"

3. Never, NEVER, NEVER do right things in a wrong way; not even gain your rights by any kind of fraud or deceit; never seek to promote a good cause by the devil's methods; never seek to build up even the kingdom of God by unkind words, or hatred, or bitterness against those who differ from you.

"Overcome evil with GOOD."

4. Otherwise your cup that God made to run over with joy will be mingled with sorrows unnumbered.

5. Jacob recovered, but only by long and "toilsome steps and slow," by a long and hard discipline, by clouds and storms where there might have been sunshine. It is true, as in Longfellow's "Ladder of St. Augustine," that

"Of our vices we can frame
A ladder, if we will but tread
Beneath our feet each deed of shame."

But how much better to climb upward by the better ladder which God showed to Jacob, with angels to help us, and beatitudes for the rounds on which to climb.

LESSON XII. — March 24.

WOES OF DRUNKENNESS. — Isaiah 28: 7-13.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Wine and new wine take away the heart.* — Hos. 4: 11.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Take some concordance or Bible Text Book, of which there are many, and find all the Scriptures which bear upon Temperance on the one hand, and Drunkenness on the other. Arrange them in columns — so as to reveal:

1. The blessings of Temperance.
2. The evils of Intemperance.
3. The motives to a temperate life.
4. The way to reach it.
5. How we can aid the cause.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Isaiah took a very wise way of teaching the truth to his native city and nation, Judea. He first gives them a lesson from OBSERVATION, pointing them to what is taking place in the neighboring kingdom of Israel.

Then the prophet appeals to the people to repent and forsake their sins and intemperance, lest they should know by EXPERIENCE the curse they have seen across their borders.

The application to strong drink is apt and effective. We, as Isaiah did, should always show an OPEN DOOR OF HOPE for all who will turn to God.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Resolve to be a total abstainer.
Clinch the resolution by signing the pledge.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 3, 4, 7, 10.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — About B. C. 725, 2 or 3 years before the tragic end of the northern kingdom, B. C. 722.

Place. — The prophecy was spoken in Jerusalem to the Jews there, but in part with a reference to Samaria and the northern kingdom.

Place in Bible History. — 2 Kings 17: 1-23; 18: 1-12; 2 Chronicles 29, 30.

Kings. — Hezekiah, king of Judah; Hoshea, king of Israel.

HOME WORK**AND CLASS DISCUSSION.**

The historical situation.

Isaiah's method of argument.

The overwhelming scourge.

Intemperance as a scourge.

Why God allows such evils to follow intemperance.

God's help to escape.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: How to Escape the Over-flowing Scourge of Intemperance.

- I. BY OBSERVING THE EFFECTS OF INTemperance UPON OTHERS (v. 4).
- II. BY SEEING IDEALS OF WHAT GOD MEANS US TO BE (vs. 5, 6).
- III. BY REALIZING ITS EFFECTS NEARER HOME (vs. 7, 8).
- IV. BY PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT (vs. 9-13).

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

* On Isaiah. *Cambridge Bible*. George Adam Smith in *Expositor's Bible, Pulpit Bible, Bible Commentary*. Professor Mitchell on Isaiah 1-12. Special commentaries, by Delitzsch, Dillmann, Cheyne, Alexander, Cowles, Barnes. Prof. A. H. Sayce's *The*

Times of Isaiah, Professor Driver's *Isaiah and His Times*, Blake's *How to Read Isaiah*. Kitto's *Daily Bible Illustrations*, for accounts of the siege and captivity. Josephus, and Charlotte Elizabeth in *Judea Capta* give an account of a similar siege by the Roman Emperor Titus. Rawlinson's *Historical Illustrations* and Professor Sayce's *Fresh Light from the Monuments* throw light from secular sources on this period.

On Temperance. *Weapons for Temperance Warfare*, by Belle M. Brain (35 cents, Christian Endeavor Soc., Boston). *The Effective Temperance Committee*, by Amos R. Wells (5 cents, Christian Endeavor Soc.). *The Economic Aspects of the Liquor Problem*, by John Koven, an investigation made for the Committee of Fifty (Houghton, Mifflin & Co).

Mrs. Zillah Foster Stevens presents the following for the Primary Class to repeat in concert:—

"From drink, with its sorrow and ruin and sin,
I surely am safe, IF I NEVER BEGIN."

The other scholars may sign the following:—

FOR LOVE OF CHRIST AND COUNTRY.

I HEREBY MAKE MY

Declaration of Independence

AGAINST KING ALCOHOL.

I PLEDGE MYSELF never to use intoxicating liquor as a drink, and I promise to do all I can to end the DRINK HABIT and the LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

SIGNED.....

PLACE.....

DATE.....190...

INTEMPERANCE A DESTROYING STORM, AN OVERWHELMING SCOURGE.

I. Learning by Observing the Effects upon Others. A Terrible Object-Lesson. — Vs. 1-4. The Prophet, seeing the danger threatening his own nation from their unrighteousness, urged them to look beyond the walls of Jerusalem over to the northern kingdom and observe what was going on and take warning.

FIRST. THE MATERIAL OBSERVATION LESSON. Palestine lay between the two great nations of the then known world — Assyria on the northeast and Egypt on the southwest.

Neither could reach the other without going through Palestine. Each wanted this narrow intermediate country, both as a defense against the other and as a safe place where they could gather their forces for attack. The Assyrians from the north were at this time in northern Israel trying to capture Samaria and devastating the country. Jerusalem, a strong fortress, a very Gibraltar, rarely captured, and outside of the great highways between the two great nations, felt safe. Egypt was making overtures to Judea, and the latter had made an agreement with them, which the prophet calls a "covenant with death" and an "agreement with hell or the grave," because it was, in the words of George Adam Smith, "an unhallowed, underhand intrigue, accomplished by much swindling and false conceit of cleverness," "a secret agreement with the southern power (Egypt), while the open treaty with the northern (Assyria) was still in force." It was a covenant that came from moral death, and was certain to lead to national death and destruction. But the Jews seemed to be blind to the facts and unconscious of their danger, as Jonah dreaming in the storm that was overwhelming the ship; and Isaiah is calling to them, "Awake, awake thou that sleepest."

The overwhelming scourge of the Assyrian hordes was devastating the glory of Israel. The semi-savage armies were overrunning the country with all wanton crimes and cruelties, destroying everything good.

They were sweeping away cities and villages, farms, cattle, orchards — everything. The Prophet sees them drifting as in the rapids of Niagara swiftly toward destruction. He sees the storm-clouds on the horizon threatening tempest and lightning blasts and destruction.

Within three or four years Samaria, the capital, was captured, and the northern kingdom swept out of existence by the Assyrians.

SECOND. THE OBSERVATION OF SINS AND CRIMES FOMENTED BY INTEMPERANCE. The moral scourge was the reason for the material desolation. Here, as elsewhere, there were two sources of wealth. The God-given wealth was from fruitful fields cultivated in peace, from flocks and herds and orchards, and from legitimate commerce. This God-given wealth was blessed. It reached all classes. It was possible to all who were industrious, moral, and economical.

The other source of wealth was the spoils of the nations they conquered. They gathered in the flocks and herds of other lands. They brought to their houses the luxuries of foreign palaces and the garnered wealth of conquered cities. This wealth was sudden, unevenly distributed, from unjust sources, connected with cruelty, selfishness, and crime. As always, the Cain-mark was on its forehead, it bore a curse in its heart, and it brought an atmosphere of moral poison. It was unblest. The natural results on character and morals we learn from Amos and Hosea and Isaiah. Drunkenness, debauchery, corruption, oppression of the poor, murder, profanity, lying, stealing, ran riot among all classes of people.

"The demon of drunkenness was eating out their manhood. Samaria is represented under the three figures of the 'first ripe, premature fig,' 'the crown of pride,' and the 'flower of his glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley.' The stateliness and the situation of Samaria are referred to in the glowing metaphors, and the onrushing desolation that was to sweep it away is before the prophet's eye, and touches his words with pity when he calls it 'the fading flower' — so brilliant in its bloom, so soon to wilt and drop. . . . It is a city of 'them that are smitten down with wine.' What chance of surviving has a flower when 'a tempest of hail, a destroying storm, a tempest of mighty waters overflowing,' batters and blows and floods the garden? It will be beaten flat, and all its gay petals lashed and torn. That is what will become of the proud city sitting queen-like on its hill, at the top of its fertile valley. 'The Lord hath a mighty and strong one' — the invader is his, his instrument, little as he thinks it. His eager lust of conquest is wonderfully painted as like the greedy appetite of one who finds the earliest fig of the season, and devours it as soon as he has plucked it." — *Alexander MacLaren*, in *Sunday-School Times*. "This 'hasty fruit' is small in quantity, and at the time it ripens the trees and vineyards generally are not under surveillance; that is, no watchman is on duty, and therefore any one passing a fig-tree, and discovering on it early fruit, seizes upon it with avidity, as if he had a right to it, enjoying it with the greater relish from the fact of its scarcity, and on the principle that 'stolen waters are sweet.' 'While it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.' Under this expressive figure Isaiah pictures the avidity with which the Assyrian king would devour Samaria." — *Mrs. Ghosn-el-Howie*, in *Sunday-School Times*.

Isaiah saw the gathering storm in the northeast. The Assyrian empire was still "maintained by a standing army of veteran soldiers, commanded by able generals" (*Sayce*), and

7. But ^{they} ^{these} also ¹ have erred through wine, and through strong drink are ^{out of the way;} ^{gone astray.} ² the priest and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are ^{out of the way} ^{gone astray} through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble ^{in judgment.} ^{in judgement.}

¹ Prov. 20: 1.

² Isa. 56: 10, 12.

soon their legions would sweep like a hurricane over Israel, beat upon Samaria, and Judah could not wholly escape its fury. Isaiah therefore "raised his voice to the magnates of Jerusalem: 'Lift your heads from your wine-bowls; look north. The sunshine is still on Samaria, and your fellow drinkers there are reveling in security. But the storm creeps up behind. They shall certainly perish soon; even you cannot help seeing that. Let it scare you, for their sin is yours, and that storm will not exhaust itself on Samaria. Scorners of religion and righteousness, except ye cease being skeptical and drunken, and come back from your diplomacy to faith and reason, ye shall not be saved!'" — *George Adam Smith*.

II. Learning by Ideals and Promises. — Vs. 5, 6. "To show the slaves of Circe the physical disaster impending — which you must begin by doing, if you are to impress their brutalized minds — is not enough. The lesson of Tennyson's *Vision of Sin*, and of Arnold's *New Sirens*, is not enough. . . . When you have made the sensual shiver before the disease that inevitably awaits them, you must go on to show that there are men who have the secret of surviving the most terrible judgments of God, and lift their figures calm and victorious against the storm-washed sky. . . . It is Isaiah's health as a moralist that he combines the two. No prophet ever threatened judgment more inexorable and complete than he. Yet he never failed to tell the sinner how possible it was for him to be different." — *Rev. George A. Smith*.

Hence the prophet kept before the people the promise of the Lord, the glorious purpose for which he had raised them up, to be the makers of the kingdom of God. If many refused, yet a "residue" would receive the "crown of glory" and the "diadem of beauty" which the Lord himself would be to those who obeyed him; would receive the fulfilment of all the promises to Abraham and the patriarchs, growing brighter in every generation, the descriptions of which are given in the noblest terms in the book of Isaiah.

There was one way, and only one, by which they could receive these blessings.

III. Learning by Experience. — Vs. 7, 8. 7. But they also. The people of Judah, who had been specially chosen of God. NOTE the effects of strong drink portrayed in this verse. (1) Erring, wandering into forbidden ways and places. (2) Even the religious teachers are led astray. (3) They are wholly absorbed in appetite. (4) They cannot see things as they are. (5) They cannot judge correctly. The whole life is perverted. **Have erred through wine.** The American Revision translates "Reel with wine, and stagger with strong drink." But Prof. Willis J. Beecher thinks the older translation is more accurate. "The point is not that the nobles and priests and prophets present disgusting spectacles of drunkenness, but that by reason of their convivial habits they take the wrong road, commit errors, miss the trail, lose their course. The older translations are correct, 'err,' 'are out of the way,' 'are gone astray.'" **They err in vision.** Strong drink not only perverts the natural vision, but the moral vision. Intemperance perverts the vision of right and wrong, the business judgment, the views of truth and duty. Men do under that influence what they would not do in their right mind. Hence more and more do business men require total abstinence of those they employ.

When Mr. Joshua Bailey, of Philadelphia, was in London last year, a representative of the *London Sunday School Chronicle* interviewed him on the Temperance question.

"Does your conviction of the evils of alcohol influence you in the choice of work-people?"

"I am glad you have asked me the question. As a merchant I employ a large number of people, but they are all total abstainers. . . . If a lad who comes to see me about a situation tells me that he drinks beer, I warn him that he is throwing away half his chances in life."

"Do many other employers of labor act on the same principle?"

"When I began to make total abstinence a condition of employment, I knew of no other employer of labor who did so; but numerous merchants and manufacturers are now acting on similar principles. Many who are not themselves good examples as to total abstinence acknowledge the correctness of our position by refusing to take into their employ

8. For all tables are full of vomit *and* filthiness, *so that there is no place clean.*

9. ¹ Whom ^{shall will} he teach knowledge? and whom ^{shall will} he make to understand ^{a doctrine? them that are the message? them that are} weaned from the milk, ^{and and} drawn from the breasts?

10. For ^{precept must be it is precept} upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little:

11. ^{For with 2 stammering} Nay, but ^{by men of strange} lips and ^{with} another tongue ^b will he speak to this people:

12. ^{To to} whom he said, This ^{is is} the rest, ^{wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; give ye rest to him that is weary;} and this ^{is is} the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

13. Therefore ^{But} shall the word of the LORD ^{be} unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, *and* there a little; that they ^{might may} go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

¹ Jer. 6: 10.

² 1 Cor. 14: 21.

a Hebrew, *the hearing?*
b Or, *he hath spoken.*

any but total abstainers. Practically it is written over their doors: '*None but abstainers need apply.*'"

8. Filthiness. Strong drink produces filthiness of mind and body.

"Palestine was in antiquity famous for its vines and wine. There are ten different names in the Old Testament for the vine, and twelve for wine, and at least ninety texts in which drunkenness and drinking are mentioned." — *Geikie*.

IV. Learning by Precept upon Precept. Vs. 9-13.

THE PEOPLE RESENT THE PROPHET'S INTERFERENCE. Vs. 9 and 10 are the resentful reply of the Jerusalem drinkers to the prophet's urgent appeal.

9. Whom shall he teach knowledge? What right has Isaiah to talk to us thus? Are we babies just *weaned from the milk*? Are we mere school children to be chided and warned in this way?

10. For precept must be upon precept. The R. V. gives the true meaning, "For it is precept upon precept." The prophet is telling the same story all the time, continually repeating, everywhere, all the time, in season, out of season, the same old warning. "We must conceive the abrupt, intentionally short, reiterated, and almost childish words of v. 10 as spoken in mimicry, with a mocking motion of the head, and in a childish, stammering tone." — *Ewald*. The original runs thus: "Ki tsav la-tsav, tsav la-tsav, qav la-qav, qav la-qav; z'eir sham z'eir sham." — *Expositor's Bible*.

THE PROPHET'S REPLY. **11. "Nay."** Here begins Isaiah's reply. This seems monotonous to you, but you will have another kind of monotony if you do not give heed to my words. **For with stammering lips.** Better, as R. V., "but by men of strange lips, and with another tongue," *viz.*, that of the Assyrian hordes, **will he speak to this people (12) to whom he said, This is the rest.** God had pointed out to them how they might have rest and prosperity, **yet they would not hear.**

13. Therefore by the Assyrian invasion, they should find precept upon precept, etc., a monotonous teaching by afflictions and sorrows, till they . . . fall backward, and be broken, as came to pass in later years.

GENERAL HARRISON AND WINE. "A Pennsylvania lady tells that when General Harrison was running for the presidency he stopped at the old Washington House in Chester for dinner. After dinner was served, it was noticed that the general pledged his toast in water, and one of the gentlemen from New York, in offering another, said, 'General, will you not favor me by drinking a glass of wine?' The general refused in a very gentlemanly manner. Again he was urged to join in a glass of wine. This was too much. He rose from the table, his tall form erect, and in the most dignified manner replied: 'Gentlemen, I have refused twice to partake of the wine-cup. That should have been sufficient. Though you press the cup to my lips, not a drop shall pass the portals. I made a resolve when I started in life that I would avoid strong drink, and I have never broken it.'

I am one of a class of seventeen young men who graduated, and the other sixteen fill drunkards' graves — all through the pernicious habit of wine drinking. I owe all my health, happiness, and prosperity to that resolution. Will you urge me now?" — *The Christian*.

THE BOY WHO MADE THINGS INTERESTING. When this lesson was used three years ago, a boy of the Tenth Legion in St. Louis demonstrated how a Temperance Lesson may be made interesting. In the yearly review, he was assigned the Temperance Lesson. When he arose no one expected anything interesting.

"But before our boy had been sixty seconds on his feet, sleepiness, indifference, giggling, and scrimmaging had disappeared. Eyes, ears, attention were all for the little fellow in knee-pants. He began:

"Ladies and gentlemen: I have been assigned the great International Temperance Lesson, whose title is "Overcome with Wine," and which tells of the drunkards of Ephraim. But in place of reciting about the drunkards of Ephraim, it is more appropriate, I think, to tell you about the drunkards of St. Louis."

"A newspaper, one of the great city dailies, was in the boy's hand, and with a vividness that made things real, he read an article which related how nineteen men had been shot in the open Sunday saloons of St. Louis during the past year, — nine of them killed. Then the boy talked ten minutes.

"Interesting? You should have seen those people. They applauded the brave, sensible lad.

"It is worth while to understand clearly the interest-compelling method employed by that boy. What did he do? Simply this: he searched for, he selected, the main practical truth from that lesson, — 'Woe to the drunkards.' This main truth he moved forward from 725 B. C. He transferred it to A. D. 1904, and laid it alongside present-day facts and present-day conditions. And in doing this he taught his audience that Isaiah's warning, spoken twenty-six centuries ago in the streets of Jerusalem, was no old story, out of date; it was fresh, up to date, and as vitally interesting as if spoken by our own preachers in the streets of New York, or Chicago, or St. Louis." — *Mrs. Zillah Foster Stevens*, in *Sunday School Times*.

LESSON XIII. — March 31.

REVIEW.

READ Psalm 104.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The Lord knoweth them that are his.* — 2 TIM. 2: 19.

FOR DIFFERENT AGES OF THE SCHOLARS different material must be selected. Every known course, for every grade, from the Primary class to students in the theological seminaries, makes the subjects of these lessons, and the Scripture they cover, the basis of their teaching, selecting the material to be taught, which is adapted to those taught.

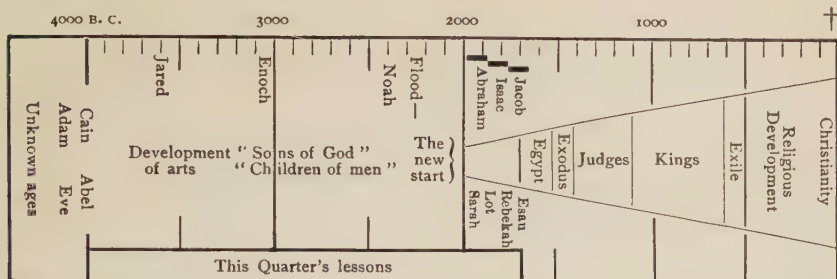
SUBJECT: THE BEGINNINGS OF THE WONDERFUL STORY OF THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

I. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE PLACE, which is the scene of the marvelous Redeeming Love of God. The last two chapters of the Bible describe its completion.

II. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE RACE to be redeemed from sin and trained to become the perfect race of man.

III. THE BEGINNINGS OF THE TRAINING and moral development of man. The whole Bible is the story of this training by God's wisdom and love, and the last two chapters are a picture of its aim and results.

THE CHAIN OF EVENTS, bearing on the moral training of mankind. Study the effect of each event upon the historical progress.



The exact dates no one knows. But it is well to keep in mind the dates in the margins of our Bibles, so that we may realize the time element and the relation of the events to one another.

HOME WORK OF THE TRAVEL CLUB. When people return from long travels in a foreign land, they are apt to place the pictures of the places they have visited and the descriptions they have written in their home letters in a scrap-book, for deeper impression on their memory and for home repetition of their travels.

So the scholars should travel again over the scenes they have visited during the past three months, look over the pictures in the *Notes* and in the *Quarterlies* they have used, and other pictures which the teacher can provide.

They can look for EDEN and the scene of the deluge, if they can find them; then go to

UR, CHALDEA, HARAN, CANAAN, SHECHEM, BETHEL, HEBRON, BEERSHEBA, OAKS OF MAMRE, CAVE OF MACHPELAH, GERAR, EGYPT, THE DEAD SEA, THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN.

THE PROCESSION OF GREAT MEN who have influenced for good or evil not only their own generation, but all who came after them. "Universal history," says Carlyle, "the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the history of the great men who have worked here." "One comfort is that great men, taken up in any way, are profitable company. We cannot look upon a great man without gaining something from him." "We all love great men." "Does not every true man feel that he is himself made higher by doing reverence to what is really above him?" "It is well said, in every sense, that a man's religion is the chief fact with regard to him. A man's or a nation of men's."

ADAM, EVE, CAIN, ABEL, JARAL, JUBAL, TUBAL-CAIN, ENOCH, NOAH, ABRAHAM, SARAH, LOT, ISAAC, REBEKAH, JACOB, ESAU.

A DISCUSSION by the class of the characters of these persons, comparing them, contrasting them, pointing out the characteristics which have had most influence for good, and those which are warnings instead of examples.

MEMORABLE SAYINGS. ANCIENT GEMS. Search the chapters of Genesis which we have been studying for brief sentences or phrases which should be written in the memory of all.

SECOND QUARTER,

APRIL 7 TO JUNE 30, 1907.

FROM JACOB TO THE EXODUS.

LESSON I. — April 7.

JACOB'S VISION AND GOD'S PROMISE.

Genesis 28 : 1-5, 10-22.

COMMIT vs. 13, 14. READ Gen. 27 : 46-28 : 22.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest.* — GEN. 28 : 15.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. Review the account of Abraham's coming from Mesopotamia. Gen. 11 : 27-12 : 9.

2. Read the comment on these events in Hosea 12.

3. Study Bible dreams: Abimelech's, Gen. 20 : 3; Jacob's other dreams, Gen. 31 : 11-13; 46 : 2-4; Laban's, Gen. 31 : 24; Joseph's, Gen. 37 : 5-10; Pharaoh's, and his officers', Gen. 40, 41; the Midianite's, Judg. 7 : 13; Solomon's, 1 Kings

3 : 5-15; Nebuchadnezzar's, Dan. 2 : 4; Joseph's, Matt. 1 : 20-23; 2 : 13, 19, 22; Pilate's wife's, Matt. 27 : 19; Paul's, Acts 16 : 9; 23 : 11, etc.

4. Compare God's covenants with Abraham and Isaac and Isaac's blessing, Gen. 12 : 1-3; 15 : 1-21; 17 : 1-21; 22 : 15-18; 26 : 1-5; 27 : 27-29.

5. New Testament light on this event: John 1 : 51; Heb. 1 : 14; John 14 : 6; 1 Tim. 2 : 5.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

The Primary Department will be interested in a golden stairway which the teacher will draw (however simply), telling the teacher, as the lesson proceeds, the various blessings which helped Jacob nearer to God. The steps of Jacob's *Ladder of Blessing* were (1) a mother's love, (2) a father's blessing, (3) his exile and loneliness, (4) the ministering angels, (5) God's promises, (6) his own reverence, (7) the pillar of remembrance, (8) his promise to serve God.

The Intermediate Department may be asked to bring to the class brief statements of the two covenants, that of God and that of Jacob, with one other Bible reference bearing on each.

The Senior Department may hold discussions, each under a different leader, of the principal topics suggested: marriage

with non-believers; angelic presences today; providence in personal and national life; the practice of tithing; the value of formal pledges.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — The time is not definitely known, — probably about 1780 B. C. Isaac was 117 years old, and Esau and Jacob were 57, possibly.

Places. — Beer-sheba is on the southern edge of Palestine. Bethel is about twelve miles north of Jerusalem. "There is a little village and a well at Bethel, which is on a hill, and the ruins of a Crusaders' church stand there. On a hill a quarter of a mile away are the ruins of a so-called 'castle of Abraham,' which some consider the site of the old Bethel." — Charles G. Trumbull.



THE GREAT PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT.
(The Land of the Pharaohs.)

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 13, 14; Psa. 139: 9-12; Josh. 1: 9.

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Jacob's exile: the cause; the good it did him.
 Jacob's character, and why God blessed him.
 Dreams, in the Bible and in our lives.
 Angels, their nature and ministry.
 Trace God's covenant from Abraham to Jacob.
 Tithes in the Bible. What should be our rule of giving?
 Jacob's pillar, and the way we should imitate it.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Two Covenants, God's and Jacob's.

I. JACOB, THE EXILE, IN NEED OF COMFORT (VS. 1-5, 10, 11).

The cause of the exile.
 No marriage with an idolater.
 Esau's blundering imitation.
 A father's blessing.
 Jacob's stony pillow and hard lot.

II. JACOB COMFORTED BY A HEAVENLY VISION AND A RENEWED COVENANT (VS. 12-15).

How Jacob's heart was softened.
 The beautiful dream.
 Ladder lessons.
 A present God.
 God's promises to Jacob.

III. JACOB'S COVENANT, A RESPONSE TO GOD'S COVENANT (VS. 16-22).

Jacob's threefold response.
 Outward helps to the inner life.
 The consecration of wealth.
 God's covenants and ours.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Books on Jacob: Robinson's *Bethel and Peniel*; Rawlinson's *Isaac and Jacob*; Meyer's *Israel, a Prince with God*. Admirable chapters in Maurice's *Patriarchs and Lawgivers of the Old Testament*; Whyte's *Bible Characters*; Men of the Old Testament (by Gibbon); Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible*; Geikie's *Old Testament Characters*; March's *Night Scenes in the Bible*; Blaikie's *Heroes of Israel*; Kingsley's *Gospel of the Pentateuch*; Hanna's *Patriarchs of the Bible*. Macduff's *Eventide at Bethel* is wholly given up to this event. Glimpses of Bethel in Trumbull's *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Poems on Jacob's dream and references to it in literature are very numerous: Longfellow's "Ladder of St. Augustine" and "Sandalphon"; Bonar's "Bethel Dream-land"; Lucy Larcom's "The Ladder of Angels"; Conder's "Jacob's Pillow and Pillar"; Whittier's "My Thanks," "The Holy Land," "The Vision of Echard"; Tennyson's "Early Spring"; Cowper's "Olney Hymns," XXIX.; Newton's "Olney Hymns," IX.; Montgomery's "Chronicle of Angels," I.; Tilton's "The Two Ladders"; Alexander's "Death of Jacob"; Sir Thomas Browne's "Evening Hymn"; "On Jacob's Pillow," by Quarles. Other poems by Croly, Charles Wesley, Logan ("O God of Bethel"), Adams ("Nearer, my God, to thee"), Arthur Hugh Clough ("Jacob"). See also Ruskin's "Crown of Wild Olive," §§62-4.

1. And I'saac called Jā'cob, and ¹ blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, ² Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Cā'nāan.

2. ³ Arise, go to ⁴ Pa'dlan-a'ram, Pad'dlan-a'ram, to the house of ⁵ Bēth-u'el thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of ⁶ Lā'ban thy mother's brother.

¹ Gen. 27: 33.² Gen. 24: 3.³ Hos. 12: 12.⁴ Gen. 25: 20.⁵ Gen. 22: 23.⁶ Gen. 24: 29.

I. Jacob, the Exile, in Need of Comfort. — Vs. 1-5, 10, 11. We now, taking up again the story of Jacob, find him in quite different circumstances. The successful planter has become the miserable exile. The punishment of knavery has begun. For Esau, enraged at the theft of his birthright, had threatened to kill his brother; and Rebekah, to save her dear son, was compelled to send him away.

1. And Isaac. Now an old man of 117. Called Jacob. About 57 years old, a young man for those times of long life. And blessed him. "There is no attempt to substitute Esau for Jacob." *Ellicott*. Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. This was Rebekah's contrivance (Gen. 27: 46), in order to get Jacob safely away; and yet it was not wholly a pretext, for a wife must be provided for the now recognized first-born, and no alliance with heathenism was fit for the one in whose line the great

3. ¹ And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a <sup>multitude of people;
company of peoples;</sup>

4. ^{And} give thee ² the blessing of A'brā-hām, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land <sup>3 wherein thou art a stranger,
of thy sojournings,</sup> which God gave unto A'brā-hām.

5. And I'saac sent away Jā'cob: and he went to <sup>Pa'dan-a'ram
Pad'dan-a'ram</sup> unto Lā'ban, son of Bēth-u'el the Syr'i-an, the brother of Re-bēk'ah, Jā'cob's and E'sau's mother.

10. And Jā'cob ⁴ went out from Bē'er-shē'ba, and went toward ⁵ Hā'ran.

11. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took ^{one} of the stones of ^{that} the place, and put <sup>them for his pillows,
it under his head,</sup> and lay down in that place to sleep.

¹ Gen. 17: 1, 6.

² Gen. 12: 2.

³ Gen. 17: 8.

⁴ Hos. 12: 12.

⁵ Called, Acts 7: 2, *Charran*.

Abrahamic covenant would descend. It would be well for Christians if they also took heed to "be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6: 14).

2. **Go to Padan-aram** (R. v., "Paddan-aram"). "The field of Aram," the northern part of Mesopotamia, the flat lands bordering the Euphrates. Thence came Abraham and Rebekah, and there still lived Jacob's uncle Laban, the grandson of Nahor, Abraham's brother.

3. **And God Almighty bless thee.** Isaac's blessing given Jacob was a repetition of that given to Abraham by Jehovah (Gen. 17: 1-8; 22: 15-18). It consisted of two promises: numerous descendants, and the final complete possession of Canaan, **the land wherein thou art a stranger** (v. 4), — an echo of the promise to Abraham (Gen. 17: 8).

A FATHER'S BLESSING. The best "start in life" a young man can have is the benediction of a godly father or mother. It means that he is in line with an inheritance of noble character that is worth far more than wealth or station.

5. **Unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian.** In Hebrew, "the Aramean." **The brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.** Jacob, as the acknowledged first-born, now stands in the record before his brother.

A BLUNDERING IMITATION. Verses 6-9 present a keen picture of the slow-witted Esau. He seems for the first time to have realized his parents' grief at his marriage with heathen women, and stupidly tries to repair his fault by a third marriage. But so dull is he that he chooses a daughter of Ishmael, Hagar's son, "one who was probably more hostile and alien in spirit, though not quite so alien in blood as the Hittites." — *Dods*.

10. **And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba.** See "Places." **And went toward Haran.** The old family home, where Abraham had lived on his way from Ur to Canaan. There Terah, Abraham's father, died. Jacob's route "led over the tracts known in later times as the highlands of Judea and Samaria, preserving a general direction of from south to north, at any rate as far as the plain of Esdraelon." — *Rawlinson*.

JACOB'S EXILE was the result of selfishness, the punishment of ambition. His mother, who had shared his fault, shared his penalty also, for she never saw her beloved son again. And yet God turned even this wrongdoing and sorrow to his own wise purposes, and thereby brought it about that Jacob got a good wife and a noble character.

11. **And he lighted upon a certain place.** Hebrew, *the place*, "the well-known place afterwards mentioned. Situated in the mountains of Ephraim, about three hours north of Jerusalem, it was not reached after one, but after several days' journey." — *Pulpit Commentary*. At Bethel Abraham had pitched his tent on reaching Canaan (Gen. 12: 8). **And tarried there all night.** The ancient town of Luz was probably still further on, to the north. **And he took of the stones of that place.** R. v., "one of the stones." "He was on the hard backbone of the mountains of Palestine; the ground was strewn with wide sheets of bare rock; here and there stood up isolated fragments like ancient Druidical monuments." — *Stanley*. **And put them for his pillows.** R. v., "and put it under his head." Hardships are not a misfortune, if they toughen our spirits. Those that are always looking for "soft snaps" really lead hard lives. Learn to have few wants, to lead "the simple life," and you will find it the strong and happy life.

12. And he ¹ dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold ² the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

¹ Gen. 41: 1; Job 33: 15.

² John 1: 51; Heb. 1: 14.



The Mound and Plain of Bethel.

From a Photograph.

ILLUSTRATION. The great missionary, Bishop William Taylor, even when an old man, was in the habit of carrying a stone with him on his many journeys, and using it for a pillow. Thus he "buffeted his flesh," kept his body under and his soul on top.

II. **Jacob Comforted by a Heavenly Vision and a Renewed Covenant.** — Vs. 12-15. Our exile was a "mother's boy." He had been long enough from Beersheba to grow homesick. His heart was softened also by the lonely place and his solitary condition, by the night and the stars.

"Think ye, my sons, in this extreme old age
And in this failing breath, that I forget
How on a day when from my father's door,
In bitterness and ruefulness of heart,
I from my parents set my face, and felt

I never more again should look on theirs,
How on that day I seemed unto myself
Another Adam from his home cast out,
And driven abroad unto a barren land."
— *From Clough's "Jacob."*

"Man's extremity is God's opportunity," and it is at such times that the Lord can teach us the lessons best worth learning, as he taught Jacob.

12. **And he dreamed.** Solomon's dream, in which he made his wise choice; Paul's dream, in which he heard the Macedonian cry; the warning dream of Pilate's wife; Peter's dream that taught him the broadness of Christianity, — these are only a few of the Bible instances showing how God can get close to human spirits when the hindering barriers of flesh and sense fall away in sleep. Note, however, that this is far from the silly, superstitious use of dreams that some people make. **And behold.** "The three 'beholds' are finger-posts of childlike astonishment at the glorious appearance." — *Delitzsch*. **A ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven.** The Hebrew word translated "ladder" occurs only here, and would better be translated "staircase." "In approaching Bethel the hillsides present frequently such an exact resemblance to the steps of a stair, that it may have been from them that the vision was borrowed." — *Hanna*. **And behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.** Literally, *the messengers of Elohim*, "angel" meaning "messenger."

LIGHT FROM JACOB'S LADDER. What the lonely traveller learned from this lovely vision we also may learn. These ladder lessons are: —

1. The nearness of heaven. Angels are all around us to help us, as the mountain was full of celestial defenders round about Elisha.

"Around your lifetime golden ladders rise;
And up and down the skies,
With winged sandals shod,
The angels go and come, the messengers of God."
— *Longfellow*.

"But oh! th' exceeding grace
Of highest God that loves his creatures so,
And all his works with mercy doth embrace,
That blessed angels he sends to and fro,
To serve to wicked men, to serve his wicked foe."
— *Spenser*.

13. ¹ And, behold, the LORD stood above it, and said, ² I ^{am} the LORD, the God of A'brā'hām thy father, and the God of I'saac: ³ the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed;

14. ^{And} ^{and} thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt ^a spread abroad ⁵ to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and ⁶ in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

¹ Gen. 35: 1.
² Gen. 26: 24.

³ Gen. 13: 15.
⁴ Gen. 13: 16.

⁵ Gen. 13: 14; Deut. 12: 20.
⁶ Gen. 12: 3.

a Hebrew, break forth.

2. These angels are magnificent creatures. God "maketh his angels winds, and his ministers a flame of fire." And yet they are ready to comfort a guilty fugitive like Jacob. There is a famous picture, "Angels in the Kitchen, a Miracle of Santiago," showing a kitchen full of beautiful angels busied about the household tasks. They are glad to do any work, if it is God's will.

3. The way to heaven is a stairway, easy of ascent, with angels to help us up. The Mohammedans, on the contrary, picture the entrance to heaven as a bridge, "as narrow as the thread of a famished spider," extending over a vast gulf, so that it is easy to fall from it in making the perilous journey.

4. And Jesus Christ is the Way! Our Lord himself (John 1: 51) applied the description of Jacob's stairway to his own great work as a medium of communication between God and man. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

"Jesus that ladder is,
Th' incarnate Deity,
Partaking of celestial bliss
And human misery.

Sent from his high abode,
To sleeping mortals given,
He stands, and man unites to God,
And earth connects to heaven."—Charles Wesley.

"Prayer climbs the ladder Jacob saw."—William Cowper.

5. Gleams of heaven may be expected through the darkest sky of misfortune and sorrow.

"As through the shadowy lens of even
The eye looks farthest into heaven
On gleams of star and depths of blue
The glaring sunlight never knew!"—Whittier.

6. "The angels ascended: there is the ascent of our prayers. The angels descended: there is the descent of God's answers. We are reminded of the afferent and efferent nerves of the body—up which flash the sharp stings of pain from the extremities to the head; down which come the directions how to act."—F. B. Meyer.

13. And, behold, the Lord stood above it. Or, as in the margin of the R. v., "stood beside him," near, as a friend. Jacob was homeless, and needed the vision of the stairway to his heavenly home. He was poor and unprotected, and needed the vision of the ministering, succoring angels. But especially he was lonely, sad, penitent, heart-hungry, and needed a Father. God henceforth fills the vision, and nothing more is said about stairway and angels. They had served their purpose, just as music, literature, nature, art, oratory, serve their purpose when they have brought the soul to God.

ILLUSTRATION. "The ancient heathens told in their fables how the gods had all left the earth one by one; how one lingered in pity, loth to desert the once happy world; how even that one at last departed. Jacob's dream showed something better."—Winterbotham.

And said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac. This is the basis of the great covenant,—the personal relation of God with his people. And it is a relation that passes thus from father to son. It is far easier for you to be a child of God if your parents and grandparents were children of God, and it will be easier for your child to be a child of God in proportion as you yourself are God's obedient child. From this basis of close, continued relationship, the covenant passes to the FIRST PROMISE: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. This is the promise of one of God's best gifts to any man, a noble country, to be possessed in peace and liberty, and transmitted to posterity.

THE SECOND PROMISE is one of enlargement: 14. And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth. In the promise to Isaac (Gen. 26: 4), his descendants were to be

15. And, behold, ¹ I ^{am} with thee, and will ² keep thee ^{in all places whither thou goest, and will ³ bring thee again into this land; for ⁴ I will not leave thee, ⁵ until I have done ^{that} which I have spoken to thee of.} whithersoever

16. And Jā'cob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in ⁶ this place; and I knew ^{it} not.

17. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful ^{is} this place! this ^{is} none other but the house of God, and this ^{is} the gate of heaven.

¹ Vs. 20, 21; Gen. 26: 24.

² Gen. 48: 16.

³ Gen. 35: 6.

⁴ Deut. 31: 6, 8; Heb. 13: 5.

⁵ Num. 23: 19.

⁶ Ex. 3: 5; Josh. 5: 15.

numerous "as the stars of heaven." For this dusty traveller the promise is so worded as to make his very discomforts a symbol of blessing. **And thou shalt spread abroad.** The dominion of Jacob's descendants afterwards extended, under David and Solomon, **to the west**, to the Mediterranean, **and to the east**, to the desert, **and to the north**, along the Lebanon range even beyond Damascus, **and to the south**, far below Beer-sheba into the wilderness.

THE THIRD PROMISE is one of influence: **In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.** No nation has influenced the world for good so profoundly as the Jewish. Its Bible is our noblest literature, its great men and women are our noblest examples, and it has given us Jesus Christ, whose teachings are the source of all that is best in the world's civilization.

THE FOURTH PROMISE is one of personal guidance and companionship: **15. And, behold, I am with thee.** "This is an addition to the original promise, and is made in consideration of Jacob's circumstances." — *Dods*. The lonely traveller is promised cheering companionship. He is also promised protection: **and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest.** Best of all, he is promised a safe return: **and will bring thee again into this land.** And the threefold cord is tied with the emphatic word: **I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.** Jacob was to have many a trial, with Laban and on the way back; but God was in every trial, working out a happy issue.

ILLUSTRATION. Queen Elizabeth said once to one of her court: "Sir, if you will look after my business, I will make yours my care." If we only do God's will, as Jacob was ready to, God will see to our fortunes.

DID GOD JUSTIFY JACOB? Does this gracious covenant approve the theft of Esau's birthright? Certainly not. Jacob's exile from home, that very pillow of stone, testified to God's displeasure, and the long toil of twenty years was to punish the sinner still more. But God's blessing always goes to the fittest man, and the lives of Jacob and Esau proved how wise and necessary was God's choice. God designed these blessings for Jacob, and would have made a way for Jacob to obtain them without fraud, and without the sorrows that the fraud brought about.

III. **Jacob's Covenant, a Response to God's Covenant.** — Vs. 16-22. In no way do men show their characters more clearly than by the response they make to the goodness of God. It is like the reaction in the chemist's test-tube when a certain substance is added, which at once discloses the nature of the compound under examination. Jacob's responses to God's gracious promises were three: *veneration, commemoration, and consecration.*

FIRST RESPONSE, *Veneration.* Jacob's heart, when he awoke, was filled with reverence and awe, (v. 16) **and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place.** "He knew his omnipresence; but he did not expect a special manifestation of the Lord in this place, far from the sanctuaries of his father." — *Murphy*. "Where is Jesus Christ?" was once asked of a child. "He lives in our alley now," was the startling but true reply. It was this ability to recognize God's presence that transformed Jacob into Israel, the prince. It was the lack of it, and the content with material possessions, that kept Esau on his low plane of living. **And I knew it not.** Why not? Doubtless because he was grieving for the home left behind, and fearing his peril from wild beasts and savage men, and worrying over the reception he might meet from his uncle Laban. Like many of us, he had allowed his troubles to drive out of his mind the only one who could remedy his troubles.

17. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! We do not fear God enough. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." To be sure, "perfect

18. And Jā'cob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put ^{for his pillows,} and ¹ set it up ^{for} a pillar, ² and poured oil upon the top of it.

19. And he called the name of ³ that place ^a Bēth'-el: but the name of ^{that} the city ^{was called} ^{was} Lūz at the first.

20. ⁴ And Jā'cob vowed a vow, saying, If ⁵ God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me ⁶ bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

¹ Gen. 31: 13.

² Lev. 8: 10.

³ Judg. 1: 23; Hos. 4: 15.

⁴ Gen. 31: 13; Judg. 11: 30;

² Sam. 15: 8.

⁵ V. 15.

⁶ 1 Tim. 6: 8.

^a That is, *The house of God.*

love casteth out fear," but an understanding of God's awful majesty and power is the beginning of perfect love. It is like the rough, necessary mold which is broken after the bell is made. **This is none other but (or, "than") the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.** Not a literal sanctuary, but merely the spot where he had come nearest to God, and therefore a very precious place to him henceforth, as all such places will be to us. The gate of heaven is "any place where God lets down the ladder. And how are you to determine where it may be, but by being ready for it always?" — *Ruskin.*

"Wherever upward, even the lowest round,
Man by a hand's help lifts his feeble brother,
There is the house of God and holy ground:
The gate of heaven is love; there is none other." — *Lucy Larcom.*

SECOND RESPONSE, *Commemoration.* Jacob established two memorials of the great event, a stone monument, and a still more lasting name. **18. And Jacob rose up early.** Early rising is characteristic of men in earnest, even when their pillows are not of stone. Among the early risers of the Bible are Abraham, Isaac, Joshua, Gideon, Samuel, David, Mary, the Apostles, and our Lord himself. **And took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar.** Thus observing an ancient and natural custom, other examples being the Mizpah pillar, and Joshua's pillar set up after the passing of the Jordan. "The finger pointing heavenward is one of the earliest and the simplest forms in religious symbolism; and it seems to be this form which lies equally at the base of the Egyptian obelisk, the Phœnician stélé, the Babylonian *ziggurat*, the primitive dolmen, and the tower or spire of a Christian cathedral." — *Rawlinson.*

"On the drive from Hebron," says Charles G. Trumbull, "I was led to inquire the meaning of the little single pillars of round stones (much like our cobblestones) found here and there upon the roadside. Sometimes five stones, but oftener four, were piled one on the other, each one being carefully placed with a view to proper balance. These proved to be 'memorial stones.' Greek pilgrims of Jerusalem and the holy places of Palestine, out of gratitude to God for a safe journey thus far on the way, erect a stone." **And poured oil upon the top of it.** "With the idea of consecrating it, of marking the spot as sacred. These anointed stones became among heathen nations objects of religious veneration and worship, a form of worship forbidden by the Mosaic law (Lev. 26: 1; Deut. 16: 22)." — *Dods.*

The second memorial was a name. **19. And he called the name of that place Beth-el.** That is, *the house of God*, as Bethlehem means *the house of bread* and Bethesda *the house of mercy.* **But the name of that city was called Luz at the first.** Luz was an ancient Canaanite city, probably a little to the north of Bethel. (See Hastings' *Bible Dictionary.*)

OUTWARD HELPS TO THE INNER LIFE. These are not to be despised. I once heard Secretary Baer speak of the advantage of interpreting the initials of one's name in an inspiring way. His own, "J. W. B.," might mean, "Jesus Will Bless." An actual written record of unexpected mercies, or a ledger of answered prayers, would strengthen any Christian. The observance of sacred anniversaries is another help. Every church is a noble memorial stone. "Resolve, then, like Jacob, to keep religion in mind by the use of religious rites. Church-going, the keeping of the Sabbath, are not religion; but religion hardly lives without them." — *F. W. Robertson.*

THIRD RESPONSE, *Consecration.* **20. And Jacob vowed a vow.** When a man understands God's covenant of blessing, the natural and honorable impulse is to make one

21. ^{So} that ¹ I come again to my father's house in peace; ² then shall the LORD be my God;

22. ^{And} this stone, which I have set ^{for} ^{up for} a pillar, ³ shall be God's house: ⁴ and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

¹ Judg. 11: 31.

² Deut. 26: 17; 2 Sam. 15: 8.

³ Gen. 35: 7, 14.

⁴ Lev. 27: 30.

in return. Love begets love, and benefits inspire a wish to do something for the benefactor. **Saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me.** This is not fairly taken as a mercenary vow, an outcropping of Jacob's spirit of bargain-driving. "His 'if' is equivalent to 'since' — 'Since God is going to be with me, and to keep me, and give me all I need, and bring me back to my father's house in peace, I for my part pledge myself that he, and he alone, shall be my God; and further I pledge myself to render him that tenth of all my possessions, which is traditionally fixed as the right and proper proportion.'" — *Rawlinson*.

22. **And of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.** This giving of tithes was a very ancient custom, followed by Abraham in the case of Melchizedek (Gen. 14: 20), and carefully laid down in the Mosaic law (Lev. 27: 30-33).

THE CONSECRATION OF WEALTH. Oberlin, that poor French minister, reading of Jewish tithes, said to himself, "Well, I am sure that I, as a Christian, have three times as many blessings as the Jews had. If it was right for a Jew to give one-tenth of his property to God, surely I ought to give at least three times as much as that." And he did.

"The man who calls himself a Christian, and gives less than one-tenth of his income to the Lord, is a meaner man than Jacob, and has a lower standard than the king of Sodom, who was ready to give more than that to God's representative." — *H. Clay Trumbull*.

The argument for the tithe is the same as the argument for Sabbath-observance. All our time and all our money belong to God; but when we set apart one-seventh of our time and one-tenth of our money to God's especial service, if we do it with gladness and love and not in a Pharisaic spirit, we are far more likely to use in God's service *all* our time and money.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

GOD'S COVENANT WITH US. Christ's death is God's "new covenant" with men. It takes up and wonderfully enlarges all these ancient covenants with men. It means that God loves us, even the worst of us, with a marvelous love; that he reaches out after us, that he longs to heap all joy upon us. It is a promise to be with us everywhere, help us in all difficulties, save us from all temptation, and bring us triumphantly home to the beautiful place he has prepared for us, that we may reign with him forever.

OUR ANSWERING COVENANT WITH GOD. Since God thus gives himself for us, what less can we do than give ourselves to him? We can proudly bear his name, and join his church, and frequent his sanctuary, and serve him with all the strength and talents and wealth he gives us. We can trust him, and not worry. We can seek the advancement of his cause, and not follow selfish ambitions. We can live so close to him that every place will be a Bethel. And if our covenant thus answers to his, the stairway, extending from heaven and reaching upward from earth, will be complete, and upon it we shall ascend with the angels.

"As the deep blue of heaven brightens into stars,
So God's great love shines forth in promises,
Which, falling softly on our prison bars,
Dim not our eyes, but with their soft light bless;
Ladders of light God sets against the skies,
Upon whose golden rungs we step by step arise,
Until we tread the halls of Paradise." — *A. E. Hamilton*.

LESSON II. — April 14.

GOD GIVES JACOB A NEW NAME.

Genesis 32: 9-12, 22-30.

COMMIT vs. 26-28. READ Genesis 29-35.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.*

LUKE 10: 20.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. Read the entire section: Genesis 29-35.

2. Some interesting comparisons: Compare Jacob's meeting with Rachel with Abraham's servant's meeting with Rebekah, Gen. 24: 10-27, and with Moses' meeting with Zipporah, Ex. 2: 15-21. Compare the substitution of Leah for Rachel with Jacob's deceiving of Isaac, Genesis 27. Compare the results of polygamy in Jacob's household with the case of Hagar, Genesis 16. Compare the tricks of Jacob and Laban with those of Samson, Judges 14-16. Compare Laban's dream in his pursuit with

Abimelech's, Gen. 20: 3-7. Compare the Mizpah pillar with that of Bethel, Gen. 28: 18. Compare the Mahanaim vision with that at Bethel, Gen. 28: 12, 13. Compare v. 29 with Judg. 13: 17, 18. Compare Jacob's boldness in the presence of Laban, who had wronged him, Gen. 31: 36-42, with his terror at the approach of Esau, whom he had wronged.

3. In further reference to the divine name, see Ex. 3: 13, 14; Lev. 24: 11; Isa. 9: 6; Rev. 19: 12.

4. Read the comment upon this event in Hos. 12: 1-6.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

In the Primary Department the teacher may draw again Jacob's golden *Ladder of Blessing*, reviewing the last lesson by getting the scholars to name the steps of the stairway as the teacher writes them down. This lesson will furnish new steps, which will be named as the story proceeds: Jacob's love for Rachel, his hard work, his splendid family, his growing wealth, the escape from Laban, the Mahanaim vision, the trust in God which he gained from this midnight struggle.

The Intermediate Department will follow the general course of the plan here suggested. Each scholar may be asked to bring to the class a list of what he considers the ten leading events in Jacob's life.

The Senior Department will have several important themes to discuss: the lesson of Jacob's life for modern tricksters, especially in trade; the harm that springs from polygamy; the nature and methods of prayer; the various points brought up in the "Inductive Study."

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Was Jacob warranted in the tricks he played on Laban?
Contrast Rachel and Leah.
Point out the resemblances between Jacob and Laban.
What did Jacob learn from his stay with Laban?
How Jacob's experience at Peniel supplemented that at Bethel.
What this lesson teaches about prayer.
A study of name-changes throughout the Bible.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 26-28; Psa. 91: 15; Jer. 33: 3;
Heb. 4: 16.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: A Midnight Struggle:
What It Meant for Jacob, and
for Us.

I. JACOB MEETS HIS MATCH (Genesis 29-31).

The love story of Jacob and Rachel.
The trickster tricked.
Twenty years of loving service.
The flight. The Mizpah agreement.

II. JACOB'S TROUBLED CONSCIENCE (Gen. 32: 1-23).

The Mahanaim angels.
The approach of the injured brother.
The great propitiatory present.
The aroused conscience. The noble prayer.

III. JACOB'S STRUGGLE WITH GOD (vs. 24-26).

"Wrestling in prayer."
The touch that brings submission.
The determined clasp of faith.

IV. JACOB'S NEW NAME (vs. 27-32).

From "Supplanter" to "Prince."
The divine blessing,
Limping, but rejoicing.

V. JACOB'S RECONCILIATION WITH ESAU (Genesis 33).

Esau's impetuous burst of affection.
The Bethel promise fulfilled at last.
Lessons for us from Peniel.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — Jacob went to Padan-aram about 1780 B. C., when he was about 57 years old. Perhaps the best authorities consider that he was in Laban's service for twenty years; but others, finding too little space in twenty years for all the recorded events, reckon it forty years, understanding the "twenty years" twice mentioned in Gen. 31: 38, 41 to be two periods of twenty years each. See *Excursus on the chronology*, in Ellicott.

Place. — The Jabbok (the modern Wady Zerka) is one of the principal rivers of eastern Palestine. It flows into the Jordan from the east nearly opposite the city of Samaria. Peniel (Pēnī'ēl) or Penuel (Pē-nū'ēl) "was probably a prominent ridge near the Jabbok." — *George Adam Smith*. A city was afterward built there, whose inhabitants Gideon destroyed for not assisting him against the Midianites (Judg. 8: 17).

Chronological Chimes. — In Greece, it was about the beginning of the Mycenaean Age, of which Homer wrote. In Egypt, the great Hyksos dynasty was coming to a close.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The books on Jacob named in the last lesson. Chapter on Leah and Rachel in

Geikie's *Old Testament Characters*. References to Rachel in Clement's *Heroines of the Bible in Art*. Also Greenhough in *Women of the Bible*, and Broughton in *Representative Women of the Bible*. Sermons by Robertson (First Series), and article by Winterbotham in *The Expositor*, Vol. VIII. Books on prayer, such as Professor Phelps's *The Still Hour* and Murray's *With Christ in the School of Prayer*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Clough's "Jacob" and "Jacob's Wives." J. T. Trowbridge's "Rachel at the Well." Tennyson's "To —," (beginning, "Clear-headed friend,") and reference in "Aylmer's Field." Browning, *The Ring and the Book*, Bk. V., line 1309, ff. Milton's reference to Mahanaim in *Paradise Lost*, Book XI. Montgomery, *The Chronicle of Angels*. William Alexander's "The Death of Jacob." Newton's *Olney Hymns*, X. "Jacob at Peniel," by Charles Armstrong Fox.

HYMNS OF THE AGES.

Wesley's "Come, O thou traveller unknown." Newton's "Lord! I cannot let thee go."

I. Jacob Meets His Match. — Genesis, chapters 29, 30, 31. Strengthened by the Bethel vision, Jacob set out again on his journey of 500 miles. "It is perhaps most probable that he proceeded northward over the Palestinian highland, to the sources of the Jordan, and thence along the Coelesyrian valley, still in a northerly direction to the site of Antioch, whence he deflected his course to the east, and passed, by way of Aleppo, to Haran. This is the easiest and best-watered route, as well as the most frequented in ancient times." — *Rawlinson*.

As Jacob drew near his uncle's abode, out in the fields he saw a well, about which were several shepherds, waiting till all should be gathered. In that arid land, every guarantee of fair division must be thrown around the water supply. While Jacob was talking with the shepherds, Rachel, his cousin, Laban's daughter, came up with her flock, for young girls were then and still are used in that country as shepherdesses. If Jacob had not gallantly interfered, and with a mighty tug pulled up the great stone well-cover, she would have had to wait till the boorish men had watered their flocks.

It was a case of love at first sight. Rachel was probably not more than ten or eleven years old at the time, for "only young girls of that age are allowed to tend the sheep or go alone." — *Harper*. She was not yet of marriageable age, and moreover Jacob had nothing wherewith to pay the customary dower, therefore it was very fitting that he should give service instead — seven long years as "hired man" without pay, which, as the tender Bible words say, "seemed but a few days, for the love he had to her."

But alas! at the end of the seven years the trickster was tricked, and Jacob met his match in his crafty uncle; for on the wedding night, favored by the Eastern custom of veiling the bride closely, Laban substituted for Rachel her elder sister, the weak-eyed ("tender-eyed") Leah. This was precisely such a trick as Jacob had himself played upon his own father.

Jacob therefore was compelled to serve seven years more for Rachel, though he married her a week after his marriage to Leah. To these wives, and to their handmaids, whom Jacob married according to a custom of the times, were born eleven sons and one daughter, so that out of Jacob's misfortunes came after all the building up of his house.

9. ¹ And Ja'cob said, ² O God of my father A'bră-hă'm, and God of my father I'saac, ^{the} _o LORD, ³ which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will <sup>deal well with thee :
do thee good :</sup>

10. ^a I am not worthy of the least of all the ⁴ mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with ^b my staff I passed over this Jor'dan; and now I am become two <sup>bands.
companies.</sup>

¹ Psa. 50: 15.

² Gen. 28: 13.

³ Gen. 31: 3, 13.

⁴ Gen. 24: 27.

⁵ Job 8: 7.

^a Hebrew, *I am less than all, etc.*

The fourteen years being ended, Jacob drove another bargain for his wages. In a country where brown sheep and speckled goats are rare, he agreed to accept for hire only such among Laban's flocks, those of that nature being first removed. By a notable trick (for Jacob had not even yet seen the futility of tricks) he tried to bring about an unusual number of births of speckled and streaked animals. This actually happened, not as the result of his petty artifice, but because God so willed it (see Gen. 31: 12), so that Jacob rapidly grew richer and Laban poorer, to Laban's anger and dismay. The estrangement of his relatives, Laban and his sons, was becoming so marked that Jacob saw it was time to leave, and slipped away with his household and goods during his uncle's temporary absence. Laban's pursuit, his warning dream, his peaceful covenant with his departing son-in-law, and the Mizpah stone set up as a witness, — all that is a dramatic close to this troubled chapter of Jacob's life.

HINTS FROM HARAN. Jacob was twenty years or more in Haran. During that time he had a good opportunity to learn thoroughly a number of important lessons; among them these:—

1. That tricksters are likely to get tricked in their turn.
2. That God can and will bring prosperity to any child of his without the aid of sharp practice on the part of the man whom God helps.
3. That God's promises are to be relied upon implicitly, no matter how circumstances may seem to be opposing the fulfilment of them.
4. That God's law assigns one wife to one husband, and that any infringement of that law brings only unhappiness.

II. **Jacob's Troubled Conscience.**—Gen. 32: 1-23. Jacob had accomplished a large part of his journey and was in the northern part of the land of Gilead when the angry Laban overtook him. From there he proceeded southward and soon came to Mahanaim in Gilead, where he had his second comforting vision of angels—two hosts of them as his guards on either hand—and from the two hosts he named the place.

Jacob needed all the comfort he could get, for new peril confronted him. He had sent messengers ahead announcing his coming to his wronged brother Esau. They had returned, bringing the disquieting news that Esau was advancing with four hundred men. Jacob had doubtless hoped that the lapse of those twenty years had blunted the wrath of his impetuous brother; but now his uneasy conscience saw retribution approaching. Laban and the Mizpah stone were behind him, and he must go forward. He made swift and characteristically shrewd arrangements. He parted his people and animals into two bands, that one at least might be spared. He made up a great present for Esau, five generous droves, each of a different kind of animal, and sent them ahead at intervals, to be presented one by one and make a cumulative impression in his favor. He betook himself to praying, and offered up one of the noblest prayers recorded in the Bible (vs. 9-12).

9. **O God of my father Abraham, etc.** Jacob was appealing to the God of the covenant which he had inherited, and in the precise terms of that covenant (Gen. 28: 13). He was "pleading the promises." This is the first prayer recorded in the Bible.

10. **I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies.** Hebrew: *I am less than all the mercies.* Gratitude and humility are characteristic of all true prayer. Luther, indeed, declared that this prayer had all the elements that prayer should have. **For with my staff** (that is, my staff alone, "without escort and without means"—*Murphy*) **I passed over this Jordan.** "We must conceive of the ford of Jabbok as lying in the neighborhood of the Jordan."—*Lange*. **And now I am become two bands.** R. V., "two companies."

11. ¹ Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of E'sau: for I fear him, lest he ^{will} come and smite me, ^{and} ² the mother with the children.

12. And ³ thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.

22. And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two ^{womenservants,} ^{handmaids,} and his eleven ^{sons,} ^{children,} ⁴ and passed over the ford of Jāb'bok.

23. And he took them, and sent them over the ^{brook,} ^{stream,} and sent over that he had.

24. And Jā'cob was left alone; and there ⁵ wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

¹ Psa. 59: 1, 2.

² Hos. 10: 14.

³ Gen. 28: 13.

⁴ Deut. 3: 16.

⁵ Hos. 12: 3, 4;

Eph. 6: 12.

11. **Deliver me.** After adoration, humiliation, and thanksgiving, Jacob now comes to petition, — the wise order of prayer. **Lest he will come and smite . . . the mother with the children.** This phrase, "like root and branch," betokens utter extirpation of a family or a community: compare Hos. 10: 14." — *Alford*.

12. **And thou saidst, etc.** Jacob closes his prayer as he began it, with a reminder of God's promises, since certainly the fulfilment of the promise of many descendants depended upon the safety of Jacob's family.

22. **And he rose up that night.** This praying, and the disposal of the caravan across the Jabbok, must have carried Jacob well into the night. And then, in his loneliness, in the darkness, the uncertainty, the great anxiety for himself, his loved ones, and the fruits of his long toil, Jacob's conscience, that had gone to sleep during the two decades in Mesopotamia, woke up with a start.

AN AROUSED CONSCIENCE. Some men seek to quiet their consciences, which is like buying an alarm clock and then smothering its sound in a feather pillow.

It would be as foolish to pull up all the danger signals where people are skating on the ice, or smash all the red lights in the semaphores.

"O conscience! conscience! man's most faithful friend!" — *Crabbe*.

"What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted?

Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just,

And he but naked though locked up in steel

Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted." — *Shakespeare*.

"Conscience is harder than our enemies,

Knows more, accuses with more nicety." — *George Eliot*.

"What a strange thing is an old dead sin, laid away in a secret drawer of the soul! Must it some time or other be moistened with tears, until it comes to life again, and begins to stir in our consciousness, as the dry wheat-animalcule, looking like a grain of dust, becomes alive if it is wet with a drop of water?" — *Holmes*. That is just what happened to Jacob.

III. Jacob's Struggle with God. — Vs. 24-26. 24. Having seen his household and cattle safely across the Jabbok, **Jacob was left alone.** He was at Penuel (see



Fords of the Jabbok.

25. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and ¹ the hollow of Ja'cob's thigh was ^{out of joint, strained,} as he wrestled with him.

26. And ² he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, ³ I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

¹ Matt. 26: 41; ² Cor. 12: 7.

² Luke 24: 28.

³ Hos. 12: 4.

"Place"). Before him was the ford of the Jabbok, over which his goods and retinue had been transported during the anxious hours preceding. Its name means *the turbulent*, — a word most appropriate to the event here recorded, and a word used again in the word translated "wrestled" in this verse. It tumbles violently down through rocky ravines to the Jordan. Jacob was indeed alone in that wild place — alone in the terrible isolation in which sin always places the sinner. "It seemed as if, amid the awful pressure of that anxiety, he could not bear the noise of the camp, the prattlings of the children, or even the presence of the only woman he ever really loved," — *F. B. Meyer*. But Jacob was soon made conscious that he was not wholly alone, for he was grappled in the dark by an unseen antagonist. **There wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.** At first Jacob may have thought that Esau had sent some assassin to slay him, or even come himself. "Every plunge of the Jabbok," says Dr. Whyte, "and every roar of the storm, made Jacob feel the smell of Esau's coat and the blow of his hairy hand." But Jacob soon perceived that his antagonist was more than mortal.

"WRESTLING IN PRAYER." This strange event is often used as a model for our prayers, and rightly, if the terrible earnestness of that midnight struggle is alone considered. We are to "come boldly unto the throne of grace," "with all perseverance." "If you don't want a thing, don't ask for it. Such asking is the worst mockery of your King you can insult him with." — *Ruskin*. We are to pray as Luther prayed in great earnestness by the bedside of the dying Melancthon for an hour, and returned home, when the recovery of the reformer for his splendid later years was assured, saying to his wife, "God gave me my brother Melancthon back in answer to prayer."

But with all our fervent praying we must remember that our Father is always eager to "give good things to them that ask him." "Prayer is not a teasing and a coaxing of an unwilling God," — *Cuyler*. "Prayer is not the conquering of God's reluctance, but the taking hold of God's willingness," — *Phillips Brooks*.

"Not thou from us, O Lord, but we
Withdraw ourselves from thee." — *Trench*.

In that mysterious wrestling God was the aggressor, bent upon driving Jacob from his self-confidence and his reliance upon low means, and determined to force upon him the greatest of all blessings, a childlike trust in God.

25. "At first Jacob held his own. **He saw that he prevailed not against him.** The strength that, years before, had rolled the stone from the well for Rachel's sheep, was vigorous yet; and he was in no humor to submit. And thus do we all resist the love of God." — *F. B. Meyer*. But at last **he touched the hollow of his thigh**, the hollow socket of Jacob's hip-joint, "where passes the greatest of the sinews, descending through the leg to the ankle." — *Alford*. **And the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint.** R. V., "was strained." Evidently, this was not a mere struggle of Jacob with an awakened conscience. "Men do not become lame in imaginary conflicts." — *Meyer*.

ILLUSTRATION. Sometimes they attach an electric battery to the harness of a refractory horse, and when he starts to run away, they turn on a current that stops the great beast instantly. Such a compelling touch comes often from the unseen world into our headstrong lives.

26. A sprain in the hip is exceedingly painful, "but with that contempt of pain which has often been shown in desperate warfare, Jacob wrestled on." — *Blaikie*. Only, now "he had abandoned the posture of defence and resistance, and had fastened himself on to the angel, as a terrified child clasps its arms tightly around its father's neck." — *Meyer*. At last the angel broke the straining silence: **Let me go, for the day breaketh.** Hebrew: "Send me away, for the gleam of morning has gone up." — *Handy Commentary*. "The immortal must not be seen by mortals in that day which lights them to ordinary work." — *Alford*. Besides, the daylight would bring Esau, and Jacob must go forth to meet him.

27. And he said unto him, What ^{is} thy name? And he said, Jā'cob.

28. And he said, ¹ Thy name shall be called no more Jā'cob, but ^a Is'ra-el: for ^{as a prince hast thou ² power thou hast striven} with God and ³ with men, and hast prevailed.

29. And Jā'cob asked ^{him, him,} and said, Tell ^{me, me,} I pray thee, thy name. And he said, ⁴ Wherefore ^{is it that} thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

¹ Gen. 35: 10; ² Kings 17: 34.

² Hos. 12: 3, 4.

³ Gen. 25: 31.

⁴ Judg. 13: 18.

^a That is, *He who striveth with God, or, God striveth.*

But Jacob still held the angel close, and replied, **I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.** Chrysostom compares prevailing prayer to the current of a stream, mild and sluggish while spread over a broad bed, but wonderfully powerful when forced into a narrow channel. Such was the impetuous fervor of Jacob's prayer in this crisis. Thus Jacob made the "transition from the boldness and persistence of self-confidence to the boldness of faith and humility." — *Expositor's Bible.*

IV. Jacob's New Name. — Vs. 27-32. "As Abraham had to become God's heir in the simplicity of humble dependence on God; as Isaac had to lay himself on God's altar with absolute resignation, and so become the heir of God, so Jacob enters on the inheritance through the most thorough humbling. The new name he receives signalizes and interprets this crisis in his life." — *Expositor's Bible.*

27. And he said unto him, **What is thy name?** "The Hebrew frequently used 'name' as almost an equivalent of the 'personality' or 'character' or nature of the person or thing named." — *Hastings's Bible Dictionary.* And he said, **Jacob.** That is, "supplanter"; literally, *one who takes by the heel*, as Jacob took Esau when they were born, to hold him back. How the name sums up Jacob's whole tricky life up to this point, and how ashamed he must have been to answer the angel!

ILLUSTRATION. A wit once drew a series of pictures showing how names might be stamped on foreheads or shirt fronts, or worn as badges, in order to avoid the social dilemmas that arise from the forgetting of names. Suppose the idea transferred to things of the spirit, and that your "name," your character, were "written in your forehead," as God's shall be in heaven; would you want to hide it?

28. And he said, **Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel.** "This was in accordance with the very ancient custom of taking a new name from any important event or experience in life. It gave rise to the Christian custom of bestowing a new name at baptism, from which practice first names are still called Christian names." — *Todd.* "Who can give a man this, his own name? God alone. For no one but God sees what the man is, or even, seeing what he is, could express in a name-word the sum and harmony of what he sees." — *George Macdonald.* Thus Simon became Peter, and Saul became Paul, and Christ said to his disciples, "I no longer call you servants, but I have called you friends." Already Jacob was beginning to receive the blessing for which he begged. **For as a prince hast thou power** (R. v., "thou hast striven") **with God and with men.** "The name 'Israel,' meaning (on the analogy of other names similarly formed) 'God persists' (or perseveres), is interpreted as suggesting the meaning 'Perseverer with God.'" — *Hastings's Bible Dictionary.* "He could have been no common man who began his career as the 'Supplanter' and ended it as 'a prince of God.' He could not have wanted commanding qualities, whose name, like those of his father and grandfather, was henceforth so sacred that no one of his nation in Old Testament times ever assumed it. So sacred, indeed, that even now, after wellnigh four thousand years, the Jew, wherever found, knows no higher honor than to call himself 'a son of Israel.'" — *Geikie.* And **he prevailed.** This was the chief of Jacob's princely qualities, that he was a conqueror, prevailing over opposing circumstances, over hostile or selfish men, over the apparent unwillingness of God, and over the evil tendencies of his own heart. Such masteries will make any man a prince.

29. And Jacob asked him, and said, **Tell me, I pray thee, thy name.** "After this oracular saying, Jacob, on his part, also desires to know the name of the wondrous and, as he now the more certainly knows, divine being, with whom he has to do." — *Delitzsch.* And he said, **Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?** Manoh, Samson's father (Judg. 13: 17), received the same reply to the same question. God's

30. And Jā'cob called the name of the place ^a Pe-ni'el: for, ¹ I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

^a That is, *The face of God.*

¹ Gen. 16: 13; Ex. 24: 11; Judg. 6: 22.

name would be an expression of his character, which cannot be condensed into human words. The great Name revealed to Moses (Ex. 3: 13, 14) the Jews considered too sacred to take upon their lips. **And he blessed him there.** The divine messenger made himself known in the blessing, as Christ made himself known to the men at Emmaus by his blessing the bread.

30. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel. In v. 31, "Penuel." "It has been suggested that the latter may have been the commonly recognized local name, and that the slight change to Peniel may have been made to suit the etymological derivation." — *Alford*. Both words mean "the face of God." Merrill (in *East of the Jordan*) suggests that the name may have been given originally to some projecting rock in whose contour a face was seen. See Hawthorne's story, "The Great Stone Face." **For** (the R. V. inserts, "said he") **I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.** The reference is to the common belief that no one could look upon the face of God and live. See Ex. 33: 20, etc.

Two graphic features are added to this picturesque account. We are told that as Jacob left the scene of the midnight struggle, and went toward the camp across the Jabbok, **the sun rose upon him**, a beautiful exterior token of the Sun of Righteousness that had risen in his soul. We are also told that **he halted** (American Version, "limped") **upon his thigh**. "Possibly the lameness was not permanent, though such a reminder of his broken self-confidence would not have been superfluous in a character like Jacob's." — *Dods*. To the present day, as a memorial of this event and in unconscious testimony to its historical accuracy, the Jews with great care dissect out "the sinew that shrank" before they will eat the leg of any animal, — one reason why they will not patronize Christian butchers.

V. **Jacob's Reconciliation with Esau.** — Genesis 33. Jacob must have been wonderfully strengthened in spirit, though worn in body, by his midnight struggle, and his fears must have given place to a great peace. Nevertheless, he continued his wise preparations to meet Esau. He arranged his family, putting in the rear, as the safest place, those whom he most loved, Rachel and Joseph. Then he manfully went forward alone to meet his wronged brother. Seven times he bowed to the ground before Esau, as if acknowledging the superiority which he had stolen from him; but if Esau had come in anger, the sight of Jacob seemed to bring back the happier period of their innocent boyhood. Impetuously the injured brother ran to meet him, and in an eager embrace assured him of forgiveness. Esau even offered generously to return Jacob's present, but was prevailed upon to keep it. He urged Jacob to accept an armed escort, but this was firmly refused, perhaps with a lingering suspicion of his brother, but more likely because Jacob now felt God to be sufficient protection. Jacob speedily found a good place for winter quarters, and established himself in peace. God's Bethel promise was fulfilled, "I will bring thee again into this land."

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. "If you fear God and believe that he is with you, God will prosper your plans and labor; but never make that an excuse for saying in your hearts, like Jacob, 'God intends that I should have these good things; therefore I may take them for myself by unfair means.' The birthright is yours. It is you, the steady, prudent, God-fearing ones, who will prosper on the earth, and not poor, wild, hot-headed Esau. But do not make that an excuse for robbing and cheating Esau, because he is not as thoughtful as you are." — *Charles Kingsley*.

2. "God sees in every Jacob more than Jacob sees in himself." — *Joseph Parker*. If the most crooked stick will only submit to the Carpenter, he will bring it out straight at last. That is the comfort that comes to us sinners from the story of Jacob.

3. Not without a severe struggle can the Jacob in us, the self-seeking, crafty, dishonest spirit, be transformed into Israel. God must wrestle with some of us a long time, and at last touch the very sinew of our pride and power, before we learn that submission to his will in which alone there is happiness. Sometimes sickness is such a wrestling, or the failure of our ambitious plans, or the loss of friends, or poverty and difficult toil. But "men would better be out of joint in the body, as Israel was, than out of joint in the soul, as Jacob was."

4. This story is a great lesson in the power and necessity of earnest prayer. "Prayer takes all our heart, and all our soul, and all our strength, and all our mind, and all our life, sleeping and waking. Prayer is the princeliest, the noblest, the most unearthly act on this side of heaven. Only pray, then; only pray aright, and enough, and it will change your whole nature as it changed Jacob's." — *Alexander Whyte*.

"Come, O thou Traveller unknown,
Whom still I hold, but cannot see;
My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with thee;
With thee all night I mean to stay,
And wrestle till the break of day.

"Contented now upon my thigh
I halt, till life's short journey end;
All helplessness, all weakness, I
On thee alone for strength depend;
Nor have I power from thee to move;
Thy nature and thy name is Love." — *Charles Wesley*.

LESSON III. — April 21.

JOSEPH SOLD BY HIS BROTHERS. — Genesis 37: 5-28.

COMMIT vs. 26-28. READ the Chapter.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.* — JAS. 3: 16.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. Glance in review over Genesis 33-36, and read carefully Genesis 37.

2. Compare Gen. 37: 11 with Luke 2: 51.

3. Note the other famous event that occurred at Dothan, 2 Kings 6: 13-18.

4. Read Jacob's account of Reuben, Gen. 49: 3, 4.

5. Note some of the Bible references to pits: Psa. 30: 9; 40: 2; Jer. 38: 6-13;

Zech. 9: 11. Read of Joseph's outcries from the pit, Gen. 42: 21.

6. Learn the relationship of the Ishmaelites and Midianites, Gen. 25: 1, 12.

7. Study the price of slaves, Ex. 21: 32; Lev. 27: 5.

8. Study some of the points of comparison between Joseph and Christ: John 5: 43; 8: 54; 10: 17; 1: 11; Matt. 21: 37-42; 20: 19; 27: 18; 26: 38; Isa. 52: 13; Matt. 26: 14-16.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

In the Primary Department a series of squares may be drawn to represent the different scenes of the story, the characters being represented merely by short lines of different colors, in various positions. Or, a series of brief dialogues may be arranged, the characters of the lesson being assigned to different scholars, and their probable conversation being made up from the lesson text.

In the Intermediate Department different scholars may be asked to write accounts of the events from different viewpoints, as if they were Jacob, Joseph, Reuben, Judah, Bilhah, or one of the Midianites.

In the Senior Department it would be a good plan to have Hale's story, "Hands Off," read aloud. The discussions will relate to the workings of God's providence and to envy in our day.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 26-28; Psalm 133; 1 Cor. 13: 4.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — Considering Jacob to have remained in Padan-aram forty years, Joseph's capture would be in about B. C. 1729, eleven years after Jacob's return.

Place. — Hebron, the home of Isaac and Jacob, twenty miles south of Jerusalem. Shechem, in Samaria, fifty miles north of Hebron. Dothan, twelve miles north of Shechem.

Persons. — Isaac was a blind, feeble old man, 168 years old; twelve years before his death. Jacob was about 108 years old, with twelve sons and one or more daughters. Joseph, who had left Padan-aram when he was about 7 years old, was now 17. Benjamin was 10 or 11 years old.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: A Tragedy of Envy.

SCENE I. THE FATHER'S PARTIALITY (Gen. 37: 3).

Jacob's many griefs.
The Hebron home.
The unfortunate coat, and what it meant.

SCENE II. THE BROTHERS' HATRED (Gen. 37: 4).

A polygamous household.
Illustration: the point of contact.

SCENE III. THE YOUNG REFORMER (Gen. 37: 2).

Joseph's unhappy position.
When to report wrong-doing.

SCENE IV. THE PROPHETIC DREAMS (vs. 5-11).

The dream of the harvest field.
The dream of the sky.
Wise and unwise use of dreams.

SCENE V. THE LAD AT WORK (vs. 12-17).

The value of responsibility.
An important errand.

SCENE VI. THE MURDEROUS PLOT (vs. 18-22).

Opportunities and deeds.
Reuben's roundabout way.

SCENE VII. SOLD INTO SLAVERY (vs. 23-28).

The pit-prison.
The caravan and the evil bargain.

SCENE VIII. THE SORROWFUL FATHER (Gen. 37: 29-36).

The Jacob-like trick of the bloody coat.
The father's long grief.

HYMNS OF THE AGES.

"Saviour! I follow on, guided by thee." Zinzendorf's great hymn, "Jesus! still lead on."

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Genesis, especially *The Expositor's Bible* (Dods), Ellicott's, Speaker's, Delitzsch's, Alford's, and Parker's *People's Bible*. *Joseph and the Land of Egypt*, by Professor Sayce, in *The Temple Series of Bible Characters*. *Joseph*, by Meyer. *Joseph the Prime-Minister*, by Taylor. *The Story of Joseph*, by Miller. *The Life and Times of Joseph*, by Tomkins. *Joseph and His Times*, by Thornley Smith. *Joseph, the Dreamer*, by Bird. *Lectures on Joseph*, by Leighton. *History of Joseph*, by Wardlaw. *The Dream of Youth*, by Hugh Black. Chapters in Geikie's *Hours with the Bible* and his *Old Testament Characters*, Hanna's *Patriarchs of the Bible*, Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible*, Whyte's *Bible Characters*, Blaikie's *Heroes of Israel*, Men of the Old Testament (by Principal Rowlands), Kingsley's *Gospel of the Pentateuch and David*, Maurice's *Patriarchs and Lawgivers of the Old Testament*, Gibson's *The Ages before Moses*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Hale's "Hands Off," in *Christmas in a Palace*. Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, Vol. III., Chapter III. Longfellow's "The Sand of the Desert in an Hour-glass." George Herbert's "Joseph's Coat." "Joseph," by Mrs. C. F. Alexander. "Envy," and "Per Pacem ad Lucem," by Adelaide Procter. "Joseph and His Brethren," a remarkable dramatic poem by Charles Wells.

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

What in Jacob's family life would benefit Joseph, and what would injure him?
Why did Joseph's brothers hate him?
The difference between telling tales and reporting crimes.
The mistakes made by Jacob; by Joseph; by the brothers.
Describe the character of Reuben.
Describe the character of Joseph.
Trace the providences in Joseph's history thus far.

A TRAGEDY OF ENVY.

The youth of Joseph was a tragedy, and it should be studied from that serious point of view. To be sure, it all ended well, but in God's court the desire and purpose to kill are equivalent to the awful deed itself; "whoso hateth his brother is a murderer."

Scene I. of the Tragedy. The Father's Partiality. — Gen. 37: 3. After his reconciliation with Esau, Jacob moved on alone, with his family. He finally settled in Hebron, south of Jerusalem, where Isaac died at the age of 180. On the journey thither Rachel, the beloved, passed away in giving birth to Benjamin, and the cloud of that grief never lifted from Jacob's life. But another heavy grief was added, a family torn by dissension, the hatred of Joseph's brothers toward that best-loved son. Joseph, from this point, occupies the center of the stage.

Joseph, whose name means "May God add," was born in Padan-aram seventeen years before the time of this lesson. He was Rachel's oldest son, and inherited from her a beauty of face, of manner, and of character which had the profoundest influence upon his fortunes. At the same time, from his father Jacob and his grandmother Rebekah the lad inherited quickness of intellect, readiness to grasp advantages, the marked ability to get on in the world.

In Padan-aram, where Joseph passed the first seven years of his life, he was surrounded by a spirit of hard, envious, and angry competition. Moreover, Laban's household was idolatrous, and the taint of that curse followed Jacob back to Canaan (Gen. 35: 1-4). But the later years of Joseph's boyhood were spent under happier auspices. Jacob had learned at Penuel and by Rachel's grave that character is more than wealth, and that God's approval is the only sound basis of confidence. The aged Isaac also would fill Joseph's youthful mind with gentle teachings, and with inspiring stories of the great and good Abraham. "I am no painter, but if I were I should like to try my hand at the portrayal of the young Joseph sitting at the feet of the blind old Isaac, and listening with wonder to the recital of his experience on that eventful day when he was rescued from sacrifice by the angel's interference, and had his first insight into the world beyond." — *William M. Taylor, D.D.*

But the feature of Joseph's boyhood that had the strongest influence upon his future was his father's manifest partiality for him. Joseph "was the son of his old age," born when Jacob was over ninety. "There is a mysterious comradeship between childhood and old age — between the two extremes of life — which exists between neither and the prime of manhood." — *Principal Rowlands*. Moreover, Joseph was the son of the beloved Rachel, a beautiful and devout lad, gentle and home-loving, in contrast to his rough elder brothers.

That Jacob should feel partiality was perhaps inevitable, but to show it was most unwise. "Can Jacob have forgotten the sea of trouble into which his father's favoritism, and his mother's indulgence, cast both themselves and their children?" — *Alexander Whyte, D.D.* The famous "coat of many colors" (literally, a coat of extremities) was, as the R. V. translates it in the margin, "a long garment with sleeves." It was shaped like a modern dressing gown. "Though not necessarily implied in the Hebrew words used, it may have been of 'many' colors, for on the walls of the tomb at Beni-Hassan in Egypt, Semitic visitors are seen dressed in robes of white, red, and blue, apparently made of a patchwork of separate small pieces." — *Geikie*. Joseph's coat, moreover, was probably richly embroidered, and made of fine Egyptian linen. "This sort of robe was worn only by those who had no need to toil for their living. All who had to win their bread by labor wore short, colored garments that did not show stain, or cramp the free movement of the limbs. Such was the lot of Jacob's other sons, and such the garments they wore." — *F. B. Meyer*. Jacob's unwise gift, therefore, marked Joseph as the prospective head of the clan.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS. I. Joseph, like all the rest of us, had good and bad in his ancestry and surroundings. He might have chosen to follow the bad, as did his uncle Esau; but he chose to follow the good.

ILLUSTRATION. President G. Stanley Hall has reckoned up his ancestors, counting two parents, four grandparents, etc., and finds that, going back only as far as William the Conqueror, he inherits from twenty million ancestors. So do we all. What a chance to select good influences!

2. The head of a family, or of a school, or of a factory, or of any collection of people, needs above all things to guard against partiality. The child with an ugly temper needs more of his parents' sympathy and help than the sweet-tempered child. The stupid scholar calls for more of the teacher's loving care than the bright pupil. The ruler of a nation should not be a partisan.

3. Joseph himself was in great danger of being spoiled by his father's petting. He was saved by his naturally good disposition and his brothers' opposition. All those that are favorites need to watch themselves lest they may grow selfish, proud, and overbearing.

Scene II. of the Tragedy. The Brothers' Hatred. — Gen. 37: 4. "Joseph's coat of many colors was like to have been his winding sheet." — *Whyte*. "It should be

5. And Jō'seph dreamed a dream, and he told ^{it to} his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.

6. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed:

7. ^{For,} ¹ behold, we ^{were} binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves ^{stood} round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. ^{came}

8. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

¹ Gen. 42: 6, 9; 43: 26; 44: 14.

borne in mind that Jacob was a polygamist, and that his children were by different mothers, who, though living under the same roof, and thus compelled to maintain a semblance of harmony, must have often come into collision, through their over-anxiety to promote the interests of their own offspring." — *Principal Rowlands*. One of the many sad evils of polygamy is the family jealousies that it causes.

So we can easily understand how the brothers hated Joseph, "and could not speak peaceably unto him." "Literally, 'they could not say salaam to him'; in modern parlance, they 'cut' him." — *Taylor*. It is sad indeed when a home, which should be the happiest place on earth, becomes an unhappy place; and nothing can more quickly bring this about than envy and jealousy.

ILLUSTRATION. A bit of sand on the rim of a bicycle wheel will do no harm; but let it get into the ball bearings, and it may destroy one of them and stop the wheel. A bit of gravel in the walk is of small account; but if it makes its way into your shoe, it may lame you for days. It is everywhere *the point of contact* that has to be oiled and protected; and such a point of contact, in our social life, is the home, the place where we rub up against one another the most. That is why trouble in the family is so serious a matter, and why we should take especial care to be loving and unselfish in the home.

Scene III. of the Tragedy. The Young Reformer. — Gen. 37: 2. As Joseph was the youngest son, it was his duty to wait upon his brothers, and especially upon the sons of Bilhah, his mother's handmaid, with whom he would naturally be brought up. While he was in the field with them and with the sons of Zilpah they did something so wrong that he was obliged to tell his father; and thus his brothers became still more embittered against him. "If there was a deep sympathy between Joseph and his father, it would have been impossible for him to keep back anything in which he was deeply interested." — *Blaikie*. Some commentators think that Joseph was made an overseer of these brothers, and was thus obliged to report their misconduct.

WHEN TO REPORT WRONG-DOING. Talebearing is reporting the wrong deeds of others in a censorious, self-righteous way, taking pleasure in them, or wishing to injure the wrong-doers, or in a careless and gossiping fashion. Joseph's life shows that he was too manly to do such a thing. But sometimes it is really necessary to report evils deeds, for the good of the wrong-doers and the good of society. To do this is painful and often requires real heroism. It is like the unpopular work of the health officer, who compels people to disinfect thoroughly, and even burn up valuable belongings, in order to get rid of the plague.

Scene IV. of the Tragedy. The Prophetic Dreams. — Vs. 5-11. Joseph's life, beyond all other lives in the Bible, even Jacob's and Daniel's, was bound up with dreams. His work in Egypt proved that he was practical and wide-awake. To men of that very character, — for instance, Paul, — God has often disclosed the future in visions.

5. **And Joseph dreamed a dream.** Robert Bird imagines that this dream came to the lad one night after "they had all been at work in the fields at Mamre, cutting down the yellow wheat. As he toiled in the very hot sunshine, his brothers were constantly finding fault with him, and speaking roughly to him."

7. **We were binding sheaves in the field.** "It appears from this that Jacob was not a mere nomad, but, like his father Isaac (Gen. 26: 12), had adopted agricultural as well as pastoral employments." — *Speaker's Commentary*. And, lo. "The 'lo' and 'behold' repeated in his narration shows that he had a presentiment of something great." — *Lange*. The bowing of their sheaves before his was a token that they were to acknowledge him as their superior, as actually happened years afterward in Egypt.

9. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed yet a dream; ^{more;} and, behold, ¹ the sun and the moon and ^{the} eleven stars made obeisance to me.

10. And he told ^{it} to his father, and to his brethren; and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What ^{is} ¹⁸ this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and ² thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?

11. And ³ his brethren envied him; but his father ⁴ ^{observed} ^{kept} the saying in mind.

¹ Gen. 46 : 29.

² Gen. 27 : 29.

³ Acts 7 : 9.

⁴ Dan. 7 : 28; Luke 2 : 19.

8. They hated him yet the more for his dreams. The superstition of the times attached great importance to dreams. The brothers would think it "neither right nor seemly that the lad should thus dream about his own advancement at their expense, and yet the belief of the age forced them to believe that the dreams might yet prove true." — *Professor Sayce*. "The fact that neither the princely dress nor the confident dreams excited their ridicule, but that both excited their hate, shows that they saw the appropriateness of the dress, and already felt in Joseph a superiority which lent significance to the dreams." — *Dods*.

9. And he dreamed yet another dream. "In Joseph's history the dreams are always double." — *Ellicott*. Joseph was born in a land where the wise men studied the stars with especial assiduity, and where every one believed that they controlled human destiny. "He had often lain upon his back by the camp fire when the nights were warm and lovely, gazing up at the throng of dazzling stars until he seemed to be up among them, and could clasp a hundred shining worlds in his arms." — *Robert Bird*. **The sun.** Jacob, his father. **The moon.** His mother. Probably this has reference to Bilhah, Rachel's handmaid, who after Rachel's death may have acted as mother to Joseph. **And the** (R. v. omits "the") **eleven stars.** The eleven brothers.

10. And he told it. "Had Joseph been but a little older, and had he been but once or twice at Dothan, he would have hidden his dreams in his heart like so many guilty secrets. But, innocent child that he was, he must up and out of his bed, and tell all his dreams to all the house." — *Whyte*. **His father rebuked him.** "In making the sun and moon bow down before him, Joseph's dream seemed to violate the respect due to parents." — *Ellicott*.

11. And his brethren envied him. This envy, which was the cause of all the sorrow that followed, sprung in part from Jacob's foolish partiality, in part from Joseph's imprudent but innocent boasting, but most of all from the hatred which evil-minded men feel for the pure and upright.

ILLUSTRATION. "The Athenians became tired of hearing Aristides called 'the just,' and they banished him to get rid of that which was disagreeable; so those who are unprincipled become intolerant of the integrity of the upright who are working at their side, and do everything in their power to make them uncomfortable." — *W. M. Taylor*.

THE USE OF DREAMS. "Joseph's two dreams were evidently intended to be signs of the stedfastness of the divine purpose towards him, by possessing the clearness of special prophecy; yet were couched in such imagery as not to inform him prematurely of his destiny, and only to be understood after their fulfilment." — *Ruskin*, in *Stones of Venice*.

"We are under a living and divine Teacher who does not want us to walk in darkness." — *F. D. Maurice*.

"Dreams in their development have breath
And tears and tortures, and the touch of joy;
They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
They take a weight from off our waking toils,
They do divide our being; they become
A portion of ourselves as of our time,
And look like heralds of eternity." — *Byron*.

"In youth, beside the lonely sea,
Voices and visions came to me.
In every wind I felt the stir
Of some celestial messenger.
Full dark shall be the days in store
When voice and vision come no more."
— *T. B. Aldrich*, in *The Prelude*.

It is good to dream of great things, if the dreams incite us to realize them in action; but lofty dreams are a snare to the soul, if we rest indolently upon them, and fancy that heaven will help us without our helping ourselves.

12. And his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shē'chem.

13. And Is'ra-el said unto Jō'seph, Do not thy brethren feed ^{the flock} ~~the flock~~ in Shē'chem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here ^{am} ~~am~~ I.

14. And he said to him, ^{Go, I pray thee,} ^{Go now,} ^{flocks;} ^{flocks;} and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of ¹ Hē'bron, and he came to Shē'chem.

15. And a certain man found him, and, behold, ^{he was} ^{he was} wandering in the field: and the man asked him, saying, What seekest thou?

16. And he said, I seek my brethren: ² tell me, I pray thee, where they ^{feed their flocks.} ^{are feeding the flock.}

17. And the man said, They are departed hence; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dō'than. And Jō'seph went after his brethren, and found them in ³ Dō'than.

¹ Gen. 35 : 27.

² S. of S. 1 : 7.

³ 2 Kings 6 : 13.

^α Hebrew; see the peace of thy brethren, etc. Gen. 29 : 6.



From a Photograph by Wilson.

Dothan.

The plain where Joseph's brothers kept their sheep and where Joseph was sold.

Scene V. of the Tragedy. The Lad at Work.—Vs. 12-17. Joseph, though his father's favorite, was not a spoiled home pet, but he was trusted with important commissions, thrust out upon his own resources, put to work. That is best for any boy.

ILLUSTRATION. "A certain Greek writer tells us of some man who, in order to save his bees a troublesome flight to Hymettus, cut their wings, and placed before them the finest flowers he could select. The poor bees made no honey." A wise parent will send a child out to find his own flowers.

12. His brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. Jacob's sons had conquered Shechem, as is told in Genesis 34; but the family must have been very powerful to venture to send their flock sixty miles from the home in Hebron. However, in that place, after what had happened, they must have been surrounded by enemies,

and Jacob might well have feared for their welfare, and wish to be assured of their safety.

13. And he said to him, Here am I. "In the flash of a thought he realized the perils of the mission—perils of waters, perils of robbers, perils of wild beasts, perils in the lonely nights, perils among false brethren, who bitterly hated him."—*F. B. Meyer*. But Joseph's reply was prompt, full of trusting obedience and manly courage.

14. And he came to Shechem. "For three days he travelled on, now climbing up steep stony paths in the bare hot hills, now urging his camel into a long swinging trot over level ground, now going down into glens, wading across streams, climbing up again, and pausing on the high land, with his hand shading his eyes, to take a long view of the country beyond, and see which way the road went. At night he slept sometimes with noisy merchants in an open court, which was the only inn for travellers at a village; sometimes among the black tents of friendly shepherds."—*Robert Bird*.

17. Not finding his brothers at Shechem, Joseph wandered about till he met some one who told him where they had gone. Pursuing this fortunate information, he **found them in Dothan**. This place, where Elisha afterwards struck the Syrian army with blindness, is twelve miles north of Shechem. It still bears its ancient name (being called Tell Dothân), meaning "two wells," and the wells are still there. One of them is called "the well of

18. And ^{when} they saw him afar off, ^{even and} before he came near unto them, ¹ they conspired against him to slay him.

19. And they said one to another, Behold, this ^a dreamer cometh.

20. ² Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into ^{some} ^{one of the} pit, ^{and} we will say, ^{Some} ^{An} evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

21. And ³ Reu'ben heard ^{it,} and ^{he} delivered him out of their ^{hands;} ^{hand;} and said, Let us not ^{kill him.} ^{take his life.}

22. And Reu'ben said unto them, Shed no blood; ^{but} cast him into this pit that ^{is} in the wilderness, ^{and} ^{but} lay no hand upon him; that he might ^{rid} ^{deliver} him out of their ^{hands,} ^{hand,} to ^{deliver} ^{restore} him to his father. ^{again.}

23. And it came to pass, when Jō'seph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Jō'seph ^{out} of his coat, ^{his} ^{the} coat of ^{many} ^{many} colours that ^{was} ^{was} on him;

24. ^{And} ^{and} they took him, and cast him into ^a the pit: and the pit ^{was} ^{was} empty, ^{there was} ^{there was} no water in it.

¹ 1 Sam. 19: 1; Psa. 31: 13; 37: 12, 32; Matt. 27: 1; Mark 14: 1; John 11: 53.

² Prov. 1: 11.
³ Gen. 42: 22.

^a Hebrew, master of dreams.

the pit." The pastures of the Plain of Dothan are to this day the best and freshest in time of drought. (See Thomson, *The Land and the Book*.)

Scene VI. of the Tragedy. The Murderous Plot. — Vs. 18-22. 18. And when they saw him afar off. As Joseph descended the ridge which bounds the Plain of Dothan on the south (*Harper*), his figure would stand out against the sky-line, and would be marked by the keen eyes of the shepherds. They conspired against him to slay him. Evil thoughts in the heart take the first opportunity to get themselves carried out in action.

"How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds
Makes ill deeds done!" — *Shakespeare*.

ILLUSTRATION. "If King John had not been wishing to make away with Arthur, the presence of Hubert would not have suggested to him that he had found a fit instrument to do what he desired." — *W. M. Taylor*.

19. Behold, this dreamer cometh. A contemptuous phrase, "This lord of dreams," R. V. margin, "master of dreams."

22. The first savage plan, to kill Joseph outright, was frustrated by Reuben. While he proposed the still more horrible death of slow starvation, it was really with the purpose of coming back later and delivering his brother. But how much more noble he would have appeared if he had not tried this underhanded and ineffective method, but boldly rebuked his brothers' cruelty, and shamed them from their murderous purpose! Cast him into this pit. "Underground cisterns abounded in Palestine, and, when dry, were so often used for a dungeon—escape from them being impossible, from their frequently bottle-like shape—that the Hebrew word for them also means a prison." — *Geikie*. Jeremiah's prison was such a place. That is in the wilderness. "Reuben apparently pointed to some cistern in the desolate region which girds the little valley of Dothan around." — *Ellicott*.

Scene VII. of the Tragedy. Sold into Slavery. — Vs. 23-28. 23. They stript Joseph out of his coat. The hated token of superiority and favoritism was to be shown their father to deceive him.

24. And cast him into a pit. Thousands of such cisterns still exist in upper Galilee, excavated out of the solid rock or built of stones and plastered, to hold rain water in that dry climate. They are "trap-like and deceptive cisterns, the mouths of which are about the size of the coal-hole in the pavement of a London street, of a demijohn shape, and with smooth sides, from which escape would be hopeless." — *Laurence Oliphant in Blackwood's Magazine*. The pit was empty. The bottom, however, was doubtless full of slimy and foul-smelling mud. "In such a place he was left to die—under the ground, sinking in the mire, his flesh creeping at the touch of unseen slimy creatures, in darkness, alone." — *Expositor's Bible*.

25. ¹ And they sat down to eat bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a travelling company of ² Ish'me-el-ites came from Gil'e-ād with their camels bearing spicery and ³ balm and myrrh, going to carry ^{it} down to E'gypt.

26. And Jū'dah said unto his brethren, What profit ^{is it} if we slay our brother and ⁴ conceal his blood?

27. Come, and let us sell him to the Ish'me-el-ites, and ⁵ let not our hand be upon him; for he ^{is} ⁶ our brother, and ⁷ our flesh. And his brethren ^{were content.} ^{hearkened unto him.}

28. ^{Then} ^{And} there passed by ⁸ Mīd'i-an-ites, merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Jō'seph out of the pit, ⁹ and sold Jō'seph to the Ish'me-el-ites for ¹⁰ twenty ^{pieces} of silver: ^{And} they brought Jō'seph into E'gypt.

¹ Prov. 30: 20; Am. 6: 6.

² Vs. 28, 36.

³ Jer. 8: 22.

⁴ V. 20; Gen. 4: 10.

⁵ 1 Sam. 18: 17.

⁶ Gen. 42: 21.

⁷ Gen. 29: 14.

⁸ Judg. 6: 3.

⁹ Gen. 45: 4, 5; Acts 7: 9.

¹⁰ Matt. 27: 9.

25. **They sat down to eat bread.** Doubtless they feasted on the very dainties their father had sent them by the hand of Joseph. This heartless merrymaking went on while their brother's cries were sounding from his prison. Afterwards, when they in turn were in prison in Egypt, they remembered how they "saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought them, and they would not hear." See Gen. 42: 21. **And, behold, a (travelling) company.** A caravan of traders. **Of Ishmaelites.** "A term used in a generalized sense, to denote itinerant caravan-traders in general." — *Hastings's Bible Dictionary*. **From Gilead.** A country abounding in spices. **Down to Egypt.** One of the main roads to Egypt still passes through Dothan, by way of Philistia, to the Nile delta. The gum tragacanth ("spicery") and the laudanum ("myrrh") were used in Egypt for embalming, and the balsam ("balm") or frankincense for the temples.

26. **And Judah said.** Perhaps his brother's cries had moved his conscience. **What profit is it.** They would get no gain from Joseph's death, for Jacob would only transfer his affections to Benjamin.

27. **His brethren were content.** R. v., "hearkened unto him." Their guilt was not palliated, for slavery was generally worse than death; they merely added greed to murder.

28. **Midianites.** "The trading company must have been of mixed origin, Ishmaelites and Midianites preponderating; some of them probably cousins of Joseph himself." — *Blaikie*. **Sold Joseph.** "The slaves of Syria were highly prized, especially when they were handsome and intelligent; and the trader in spicery was also a trader in slaves." — *Sayce*. "Modern Ishmaelites would not now hesitate to make just such a purchase, and actually do so in certain parts of the country." — *Thomson*. **For twenty pieces of silver.** Probably in rings, for money then was weighed and not coined. Each piece was a shekel, worth about sixty cents; and money had ten times its modern purchasing power. Thirty shekels appears to have been the normal value of a slave (Ex. 21: 32), so that the slave-traders probably made at least fifty per cent. on Joseph.

Scene VIII. of the Tragedy. The Sorrowful Father. — Gen. 37: 29-36. Reuben was not present during this sale of Joseph. He probably went to another part of the field to tend the sheep and to draw the rest away from the pit, that he might return and rescue Joseph. When he learned what had been done his grief was great, and was doubtless increased by the thought that a little more manliness on his part might have prevented the terrible deed.

The artifice by which the brothers successfully sought to deceive their father as to the cause of Joseph's non-appearance was just such a trick as Jacob himself had played on his father in the matter of the birthright. It was completely successful, and the wretched men were compelled to witness for years the heavy sorrow of the bereaved parent. That sight must have touched their savage natures, and prepared them for profiting by the events that followed.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. "The life of Joseph is unquestionably the most thrilling chapter in the annals of Israel." — *Principal Rowlands*. This is because it is so superb an example of a victorious providence.

ILLUSTRATION. A large company of representative authors once took a vote as to the best story, considered simply as a literary product, in all literature. A very large majority voted for this story of Joseph. "The cause of the narrative's attractiveness is that the story has a good end; and the brightness is found to have been produced by the actual clouds of the narrative." — *Matheson*.

2. This experience was probably best for Joseph. It kept him from being spoiled, and developed his self-reliance and his trust in God. It was best for his brothers, for it made them more humane. It was best for the great nation into which the family of Jacob was to develop, since it withdrew them from the contamination of Canaanitic idolatry, brought them in contact with Egyptian civilization, and in their escape from bondage taught them the fatherhood of God.

ILLUSTRATION. Edward Everett Hale, in his story, "Hands Off," in his *Christmas in a Palace*, uses these events to show how fortunate it is that our short-sighted policy is not permitted to interfere with God's all-wise providence. The story represents a man in another stage of existence, looking down upon Joseph as he is in the hands of the Midianites. Being an active, ingenious young man, Joseph succeeded in escaping from his captors on the first night of his captivity, and had just reached the outer limits of the camp when a yellow dog barked, awakened his captors, and Joseph was returned to his captivity. The on-looker wanted to interfere and kill the dog before he had awakened the camp. Then Joseph would have reached home in safety, and great sorrows have been avoided. But his guardian said, "Hands off." And to let him see the evil of his interference, he took him to a world where he could try the experiment. There he killed the dog. Joseph reached home in safety, his father rejoiced, his brothers were comforted. But when the famine came, there had been no Joseph to lay up the corn. Palestine and Egypt were starved. Great numbers died, and the rest were so weakened that they were destroyed by the savage Hittites. Civilization was destroyed. Egypt blotted out. Greece and Rome remained in a barbarous state. The whole history of the world was changed, and countless evils came because a man in his ignorant wisdom killed a dog and saved Joseph from present trouble to his future loss.

3. Nevertheless, thus far in the story, it is a tragedy, the tragedy of envy. All of us need to learn the lesson. "There is but one man who can believe himself free from envy, and it is he who has never examined his own heart." — *William Duncan*. "Envy is the rottenness of the bones" (Prov. 14: 30). "It is the most acid fruit that grows on the stock of sin, a fluid so subtle that nothing but the fire of divine love can purge it from the soul." — *Hosea Ballou*. The least beginnings of it must be destroyed, or it will go on to that hatred which is murder.

4. "In Joseph's history we have the type of Christ as the Saviour, and that both in his humiliation and his exaltation." — *Gibson*. For the striking correspondences thus far, see the Inductive Study.

LESSON IV. — April 28.

JOSEPH FAITHFUL IN PRISON. — Genesis 39: 20—40: 15.

COMMIT vs. 21, 22. READ Genesis 39, 40.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* — REV. 2: 10.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. Read the full story of Joseph's slavery and imprisonment, Genesis 39, 40.

2. Read the reference to Joseph's imprisonment in Psa. 105: 16—22.

3. Compare Joseph's prison experiences with those of Jeremiah, Jer. 37: 11—21; 38: 1—28; Peter, Acts 12: 1—11; and Paul, Acts 24: 24—27; 28: 16, 30, 31.

4. Compare v. 8 of our lesson with Gen. 41: 16.

5. Note throughout these two chapters the indications of Joseph's loyalty to Jehovah in that heathen land.

6. Observe the Bible attitude toward

prisoners: *Psa.* 69: 33; 79: 11; 102: 19, 20; 107: 10-16; 146: 7; *Isa.* 42: 7; 49: 9; 61: 1; *Zech.* 9: 12; *Matt.* 25: 36; *Luke* 4: 16-21.

7. Note the parallels in the life of Christ: *Luke* 23: 39-43; *1 Pet.* 3: 19.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 21, 22; *Isa.* 43: 2, 3; *1 Pet.* 1: 7.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Primary Department. — The teacher may draw a series of dark clouds as the lesson story proceeds, labelling each: "Slavery," "Imprisonment," "Temptation," etc. From each cloud bright rays should be drawn, and these will be marked with the names of the gains that Joseph derived from each piece of adversity; as, "Patience," "Knowledge of the kingdom," "Sympathy with others."

Intermediate Department. — Divide the class into two parts; one is to look on the bright side, and the other (for this occasion only!) on the dark side. As each section of the lesson is taken up, the two sides will report upon it. Close with a summary of what Joseph learned in the school of affliction.

Senior Department. — As the lesson is so familiar to the class, take this opportunity for a little study of Egyptian civilization. Assign topics: Egyptian art, architecture, literature, government, worship, social life, morality, slavery, etc. One of the class will close with a statement of what Joseph's going to Egypt meant for the Hebrew race.

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Trace the workings of providence in these events.
How did Joseph's difficulties develop his character?
Why did Joseph succeed everywhere?
Why do we need adversity in our lives?
How are our times better than the times in which Joseph lived? and what is the cause of the difference?
What did Joseph gain from these experiences?

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — Thirteen years, B. C. 1729-1716 (Ussher). Ten in slavery, and three in prison.

Place. — "It is not certainly known in what city of Egypt Potiphar dwelt. Tradition has fixed on *On*, called by the Greeks Heliopolis (the City of the Sun) as the scene alike of Abraham's visit to Egypt, of Joseph's captivity, and of the education if not the birth of Moses. Others, and with more apparent probability, regard *Zoan* or *Tanis*, near the land of Goshen, as the abode of Pharaoh," — *Blaikie*. Zoan, the modern

Sân, is near one of the mouths of the Nile. On was situated near the head of the Nile delta, twenty miles north of Memphis, and six or seven northeast of modern Cairo.

Persons. — *Joseph* was 17 years old when he entered Egypt; about 22 years old when made ruler of Potiphar's estates; about 27 years old when put in prison; about 30 years old when made ruler of Egypt. *Jacob* was still living in Hebron with eleven sons. He was 108 to 121 years old.

Place in History. — Before the time of Abraham, an invasion of Western Semites from Canaan, called Hyksos or Shepherds, had overrun Egypt and seized the government. There were three dynasties of Hyksos Pharaohs, whose reigns extended, according to various computations, from 511 to 661 years. The third dynasty was on the throne in Joseph's time.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Light from Dark Clouds.

I. THE DARK CLOUD OF SLAVERY (*Gen.* 39: 1-6).

The sad journey. In the market place.

Light: Bought by a kind master.

Introduced to Egyptian civilization.

God's favor attending him.

Promoted for his fidelity.

II. THE DARK CLOUD OF TEMPTATION (*Gen.* 39: 7-12).

The temptation to physical appetite.

The temptation to ambition.

Light: Joseph's prompt and splendid resistance.

How making choices strengthens character.

III. THE DARK CLOUD OF SLANDER (*Gen.* 39: 13-19).

Lust become hate. The lying accusation.

Light: An unaccusing conscience.

Joseph's merciful silence.

IV. THE DARK CLOUD OF IMPRISONMENT (*vs.* 20-23).

The horrors of an Egyptian dungeon.

Light: The approval of conscience.

The approval of God.

The approval of the keeper of the prison.

Promotion and lightened imprisonment.

A character strengthened and beautified.

V. THE DARK CLOUD OF TYRANNY (*vs.* 1-4).

The butler and baker, and how they came there.

Light: Some one for Joseph to help

A source of knowledge for Joseph.

VI. THE DARK CLOUD OF NEGLECT (*vs.* 5-15).

The dreams and the interpretations.

The fulfilment. Forgotten for two years.

Light: Joseph learns patience and trust in God.

Why it was better for Joseph to wait.

HYMNS OF THE AGES.

Charlotte Elliott's "My God, my Father! while I stray," Henry Kirke White's "Oft in danger, oft in woe," "Encompassed with clouds of distress."

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

The remarkable Egyptian story of *The Two Brothers*, parallel to the story of Potiphar's wife, may be found in Brugsch's *History of Egypt*, I., 260 ff.; and in the second volume of *Records of the Past*; and in Sayce's *Joseph in The Temple Series of Bible Characters*. Compare the story of Guinevere in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. See also the story of Kretheis in Grote's *Greece*, Part I., Chapter VI. See also Charles Wells's remarkable poem, *Joseph and His Brethren*, and "Salaman and Absal," by the Persian poet Jami. "Joseph," by Mrs. C. F. Alexander. Poems of imprisonment: John Bunyan's "Prison Medi-

tations"; Crabbe's "Prisons," Letter 23 in *The Borough*; William Lloyd Garrison's noble sonnets, "Liberty for All" and "Freedom for the Mind"; Emerson's "Freedom"; Byron's "The Prisoner of Chillon"; Montgomery's "The Pleasures of Imprisonment"; Sir Roger L'Estrange's "In Prison"; Meagher's "Prison Thoughts."

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Genesis and books on Joseph, named in the last lesson. See especially Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, Bird's *Joseph the Dreamer*, and Blaikie's *Heroes of Israel*. Tanis, published by the Egyptian Exploration Fund. Osburn's *Monumental History of Egypt*. Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*. Chapters VIII., IX., in Rawlinson's *Ancient Egypt*. Chapter V. in Paton's *Early History of Syria and Palestine*.

As Joseph was led by the Midianites, a slave, down into Egypt, his life passed into the shadow of dark clouds. One after the other they rose upon him, until his ruin seemed certain. The lesson for us of the wonderful history lies in observing how the light breaks through every one of the clouds, and how Joseph's path led through the darkness of God's providence into the sunshine of his blessings.

I. The Dark Cloud of Slavery.—Gen. 39: 1-6. "In the anguish of his soul, Joseph was carried away past his father's green valley and deep well, past his mother's grave, past the very home at Hebron, on the distant height."—*Tomkins*. The lad must have "thought, with keen grief, of his father and Leah and Dinah, in their dark, shady tents behind those hills, and of little red-cheeked, laughing Benjamin running out and in."—*Bird*. "Put yourself in Joseph's place. The fondling of his father; with servants to wait on his every wish; and now, lashed to the side of a wagon in a slave caravan, and with the whistling whip of his Ishmaelite owner laid on his shoulder."—*Whyte*.

"Sold by them that should have loved thee,
Prisoner in the heathen's land;
Given by him who best had proved thee
To the dungeon and the band;
From the land of flowers and rain
Borne to Egypt's dewless plain,

Leaving tent and pastoral dell,
And the sire that loved thee well;
And the airs on upland breezy,
Where the scented cedars grow,
For the servant's toils uneasy,
And the captive's weary woe."
—Mrs. C. F. Alexander.

LIGHT FROM THE CLOUD. I. Notwithstanding all this, it was a fortunate thing for Joseph, with his native abilities, to be set down in the midst of the greatest nation the world had yet known. With widely open, observant eyes, the country lad saw on every side, as he entered Egypt, the splendid tokens of a well-developed civilization. "It was a bewildering sight, telling him of beauty, wealth, and gaiety such as he could not have believed possible."—*Bird*. He passed by houses painted over with striking colors, "of blue, yellow, green, white, purple, black." He saw glittering temples, and witnessed gorgeous heathen ceremonies. Chariots drawn by horses (then unknown in Palestine) dashed through the streets. Fine ladies were carried by, richly dressed and flashing with precious stones. Egypt was a land of learning, of the arts, of literature, of manufactures and commerce. All this was a magnificent stimulus to Joseph and means of his development, and through him, ultimately, a stimulus and development for the entire Hebrew race.

2. Joseph was exposed for sale in the open market. "It was a pitiful plight to be in—to have to face the peering looks of possible purchasers, as they scanned his special 'points.'"—*Taylor*. That was a dark cloud; but the light in it was the fact that he was purchased by a kind and discerning master. Potiphar (whose name means "he whom the Ra—the sun-god—gave") was an important officer of Pharaoh's many-officered court.

"It seems that he was at the head of what we may call the Egyptian state police, which formed one of the corps of the army, though largely employed in civil duties." — *Geikie*. He doubtless lived in a large and beautiful house, and Joseph's duties there served as an excellent introduction to the great part he was afterwards to perform.

3. But the chief alleviation of Joseph's bondage came from himself. His spirit was not broken by his unfortunate position, but even as a slave he did his best, "and the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand." The result was that Potiphar promoted him to be over all his affairs, except the preparation of his food.

"Many, if God should make them kings,
Might not disgrace the throne he gave;
How few who could as well fulfil
The holier office of a slave!"

— *Adelaide Procter*.

II. The Dark Cloud of Temptation. Gen. 39: 7-12. In Potiphar's house Joseph was exposed to "the sorest temptation that can befall any one — to sin and prosper rather than resist and suffer." — *Geikie*. Joseph's is "the history of a man who kept his heart pure and tender, and who thereby gained that wisdom which comes only to the pure in heart." — *Charles Kingsley*.

This great temptation assailed Joseph after he had become familiar with the house and its inmates by ten years of faithful service. "We may believe it was no ordinary temptation when day after day the mistress of the house, 'expert in amorous arts,' came to spread the net, with every allurements which her skill and her passion could devise. We may conceive how even Joseph might be moved by the thought that, slave though he was, he had attracted the admiration of a woman of such rank, and how the vision might flit before him that through her influence he might recover his liberty and in a bright career realize his dreams after all." — *Blaikie*.

LIGHT FROM THE CLOUD. 1. How brightly shone Joseph's character in the presence of this shameful proposal! His answer at once took the highest ground: (1) recognizing the fact that the deed would be a sin against God, and (2) that it would be base treachery toward his kind master. And so he did the best thing possible, he ran away from the temptress, though he must leave his coat in her hands. "It is better to lose a good coat than a good conscience." — *Matthew Henry*.

ILLUSTRATIONS. "In contending with certain sins there remains no mode of victory but by flight. The ancient naturalists wrote much of basilisks, whose eyes fascinated their victims, and rendered them easy victims; so the mere gaze of wickedness puts us in solemn danger." — *Spurgeon*.

"It was the prayer of a girl queen, written with a diamond point on her castle window, 'Keep me pure; make others great.'" — *J. R. Miller*.

The germs of tuberculosis, diphtheria, and other terrible diseases are floating everywhere in the air, and the only defence against them is a sound constitution. So vile temptations are everywhere, and the only protection is a pure heart.

2. The very necessity of making this choice must have done much to fix and consolidate Joseph's character. It is good for a young man to be obliged to *take a stand*.

III. The Dark Cloud of Slander. — Gen. 39: 13-19. On Joseph's refusal of Potiphar's wife, "the rapid change in her feeling illustrates Milton's keen observation that 'lust' dwells 'hard by hate.'" — *Dods*. Her shameless accusation of Joseph to her husband was the harder for him to bear because she charged him with the very sin that he had refused to commit. This abominable misrepresentation, to the master who had trusted him so implicitly, was the darkest cloud that ever hung over Joseph.

LIGHT FROM THE CLOUD. It is most striking to see how Joseph, out of pity for his master, refrains from accusing the wicked woman. "More men could be found who could thus have spoken to Potiphar's wife than who could have kept silence when accused by Potiphar. For his purity you will find his equal, one among a thousand; for his mercy, scarcely one." — *Expositor's Bible*.

Slander is the reporting of lies, and so it has no terror for a true man.

"Virtue may be assailed, but never hurt;
Surprised by unjust force, but not enthralled;
Yea, even that, which mischief meant most harm,
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory." — *Milton*.

IV. The Dark Cloud of Imprisonment. — Vs. 20-23. 20. And Joseph's master . . . put him into the prison. "That he did not at once order him to a

20. And Jō'seph's master took him, and ¹ put him into the ² prison, ^a the place where the king's prisoners ^{were} bound: and he was there in the prison.

21. But the LORD was with Jō'seph, and shewed ^{him mercy, kindness unto him,} and ³ gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

22. And the keeper of the prison ⁴ committed to Jō'seph's hand all the prisoners that ^{were} in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer ^{of it.}

23. The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing ^{that was} under his hand; because ⁵ the LORD was with him; and ^{that} which he did, the LORD made ^{it} to prosper.

¹ Psa. 105: 18; ¹ Pet. 2: 19.

² Gen. 40: 3, 15; 41: 14.

³ Ex. 3: 21; Psa. 106: 46;
Acts 7: 9, 10.

⁴ Gen. 40: 3, 4.
⁵ Vs. 2, 3.

capital punishment could only be because he had not the power of putting slaves to death." — *Blaikie*. Or, perhaps Potiphar did not really believe his wife's accusations. But, at any rate, Joseph's lot was terrible. Psa. 105: 18 speaks of the fetters and chains, entering into his flesh. In Gen. 40: 15 Joseph speaks of the prison, literally, as a "hole." "We have visited many a prison in the Levant; we have seen . . . the intolerable filth and want of ventilation, the excess of vermin, and the unmerciful stocks in which the feet are made fast. We may well pity virtuous Joseph, if he was indeed cast, as claimed by tradition, into the present dungeon of the citadel of Cairo, which is composed of dark, loathsome, and pestilential passages, where the prisoners are chained to the wall, and cold water is poured upon them until they have given up all their money to their tormentors. This prison has been called a hell upon earth." — *H. J. Van Lennep, D. D.*

LIGHT FROM THE CLOUD. 1. Joseph's conscience approved his course. It was better for him to be in a prison, from such a cause, than in a palace through compliance with sin.

2. Joseph was conscious of God's approval. 21. **The Lord was with Joseph.** No less than he had been in Potiphar's house, and for the same reasons.

3. In time, Joseph received also the approval of man, **favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.** Not Potiphar, but "an inferior officer, who was charged with the actual discipline of the prison." — *Alford*.

4. There was added freedom from his fetters, and an honorable trust. 22. **The keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners.** "Thus even in the unlattice dungeon the sun and moon look in upon him and bow to him; and while his sheaf seems at its poorest, all rust and mildew, the sheaves of his masters do homage." — *Expositor's Bible*.

5. This prison experience was strengthening Joseph's character, giving him patience, firmness, and an invincible faith in God. Moreover, it gave him a knowledge of the darkest side of Egyptian government, a knowledge invaluable to him when he himself came to rule.

ILLUSTRATIONS. The influence of John the Baptist over his jailer, Herod; of Paul over the jailer of Philippi and over Felix and Agrippa; of Christ over Pilate.

"When children gather to see the magic lantern, the figures may be flung upon the sheet, and yet be invisible, because the room is full of light. Darken the room, and instantly the round circle of light is filled with brilliant color." — *F. B. Meyer*. So the shadows of affliction disclose the lovely images of God's providence.

"There is a story of one who during some time of persecution was cast into a deep dungeon, far underground. Only once each day, and for but half an hour, did the outer light stream down into the darkness of the prison. But this good man found an old iron nail and a piece of stone among the rubbish on his cell floor. Using the nail for a chisel and the piece of stone for a mallet, he carved on his prison wall, during the moments when the light streamed in, a rude figure of the Saviour on his cross. So should we do in our life prisons. Thus did Joseph." — *J. R. Miller*.

"High walls and huge the body may confine,
And iron grate obstruct the prisoner's gaze,
And massive bolts may baffle his design,
And vigilant keepers watch his devious ways:

Yet scorns the immortal mind this base control!
No chains can bind it and no cell enclose:
Swifter than light, it flies from pole to pole,
And, in a flash, from earth to heaven it goes!"
— *William Lloyd Garrison*.

40: 1. And it came to pass after these things, ^{that} the ¹ butler of the king of E'gypt and ^{his} baker ^{had} offended their lord the king of E'gypt.

2. And Phā'raōh was ² wroth against ^{his} two ^{of his} officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers.

3. ³ And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Jō'seph ^{was} bound.

4. And the captain of the guard charged Jō'seph with them, and he ^{served} ministered unto them: and they continued a season in ward.

5. And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream, in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of E'gypt, which ^{were} bound in the prison.

6. And Jō'seph came in unto them in the morning, and ^{looked upon} ^{saw} them, and, behold, they ^{were} sad.

¹ Neh. 1: 11.

² Prov. 16: 14.

³ Gen. 39: 20.



Cupbearer.

One of the pillars of the tomb of Seti I.

V. The Dark Cloud of Tyranny.—Vs. 1-4. 1. Among the prisoners that came under Joseph's care were two of especial prominence. **The butler.** The chief of the butlers (v. 2), the royal cupbearer, an official of great influence, because he had access to the sovereign in his most private moments, as had the cupbearer Nehemiah. **And his baker.** The chief baker (v. 2). "The Pharaoh's kitchen was organized on an elaborate scale; Egypt had long been celebrated for its cooking and its confectionery, and the different kinds of bread and cakes that were made were numberless. Equally numberless were the officials who superintended the royal kitchens and bakehouse, and whose titles and order of precedence are enumerated in the papyri. Like the cupbearer, the chief baker was an important officer of state."—*Sayce*. **Had offended their lord.** There is a Jewish tradition that an attempted poisoning was the offence of the two prisoners; "but if this had been true, they would probably have been dealt with in a more summary way."—*Blaikie*. It is more likely that the officers were thrown into prison "on account of some very trifling offence."—*Preacher's Commentary*. The event would thus show Joseph something of the tyrannic power of the autocratic government into whose hands he had fallen. The knowledge of Pharaoh's vast, irresponsible power would be one more dark cloud over the captive.

LIGHT FROM THE CLOUD. 1. This experience would tend to make Joseph a more humane ruler when the power came into his own hands.

2. Joseph had some one in his care whose troubles were like his own, and "there is no anodyne for heart-sorrow like ministry to others."—*F. B. Meyer*.

3. These officials in disgrace would talk to Joseph with considerable freedom, especially as he was their servant. "He had now ample opportunity for acquiring information which afterwards stood him in good stead, for apprehending the character of Pharaoh, and for making himself acquainted with many details of his government, and with the general condition of the people."—*Expositor's Bible*.

VI. The Dark Cloud of Neglect.—Vs. 5-15. 5. **They dreamed a dream both of them.** "It is not surprising that three nights before Pharaoh's birthday these functionaries of the court should have recalled in sleep the parts they themselves used to play in the festival."—*Expositor's Bible*.

7. And he asked Phā'raōh's officers that ^{were} with him in the ward of his ^{lord's} ^{ma-ter's} house, saying, Wherefore ^a look ye ^{so} sadly ^{to day?} ^{to-day?}

8. And they said unto him, ¹ We have dreamed a dream, and ^{there is} ^{there is} ^{no interpreter of} ^{none that can interpret} it. And Jō'seph said unto them, ² ^{Do} ^{Do} not interpretations belong to God? tell ^{me them,} ^{it me,} I pray you.

9. And the chief butler told his dream to Jō'seph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine ^{was} ^{was} before me;

10. And ^{And} ^{and} in the vine ^{were} ^{were} three branches: and it ^{was} ^{was} as though it budded, and ^{her} ^{its} blossoms shot forth; and ^{and} the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes:

11. And ^{And} ^{and} Phā'raōh's cup ^{was} ^{was} in my hand; and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Phā'raōh's cup, and I gave the cup into Phā'raōh's hand.

¹ Gen. 41: 15.

² Gen. 41: 16; Dan. 2: 11.

^a Hebrew, are your faces evil?



Egyptian Baking.

7. Wherefore look ye so sadly to day? Notice Joseph's ready sympathy, "Had he sulked in prison, had he grown sour and malicious, he might have remained there till death." — *Dods*. "Joseph had suffered like them, and therefore he understood their feelings. We do not often remember that suffering is absolutely necessary to capacitate us for sympathy." — *Robertson*.

8. There is no interpreter. "In Egypt it was the business of men trained for the purpose, called in Gen. 41: 8 *magicians* and *wise men*, to interpret dreams, and to such the butler and baker could have no access from their prison." — *Ellicott*. **Do not interpretations belong to God?** A glimpse of Joseph's real humility. Loyal to Jehovah in that heathen land, he made essentially the same reply when asked by Pharaoh to interpret his dream two years later (Gen. 41: 16).

9. The chief butler in his dream found himself ministering to Pharaoh as usual. This dream "has been curiously illustrated by a text discovered by Ebers in the inscriptions of the temple of Edfu, in which the king is seen standing, cup in hand, while underneath are the words, 'They press grapes into the water, and the king drinks.'" — *Geikie*. The three branches of the grapevine which the butler saw, Joseph interpreted as three days, after which the butler was to be restored to freedom and to his customary employment.

Doubtless expecting a similarly happy interpretation, the chief baker related his dream. Here also the account has been confirmed by a study of ancient Egypt. "Even so trifling a detail as the bakemeats being said to have been carried on the head, is true to Egyptian life; for while the monuments show that men carried their burdens less often on their heads than otherwise, bakers are a marked exception." — *Geikie*. But the birds had eaten the baker's offering, so that Joseph was obliged to prophesy his execution. Moreover, there was added the worst fate that could befall an Egyptian, that his body should be eaten by the birds; for the preservation of the body by embalming, as illustrated by countless mummies, was thought essential for a happy life after death.

NOTE that "Joseph's willingness to interpret the dreams of his fellow-prisoners proves that he still believed in his own, that among his other qualities he had this characteristic also of a steadfast and profound soul, that he 'reverenced as a man the dreams of his youth.'" — *Dods*.

Very naturally, Joseph had asked the cupbearer to procure his release, if possible, when restored to favor. The butler had numberless opportunities for the attempt, and how

12. And Jō'seph said unto him, ¹ This ^{is} the interpretation of it: The three branches ^{2 are} three days;

13. Yet within yet three days shall Phā'raōh ³ lift up thine head, and restore thee unto ^{thy place:} ^{thine office:} and thou shalt ^{deliver} ^{give} Phā'raōh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler.

14. But ^{have} ^{4 think on me} ^{me in thy remembrance} when it shall be well with thee, and ⁵ shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Phā'raōh, and bring me out of this house:

15. ^{For} ^{for} indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hē'brews: ⁶ and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.

¹ V. 18; Gen. 41: 12, 25; Judg. 7: 14; Dan. 2: 36.

² Gen. 41: 26.

³ 2 Kings 25: 27; Psal. 3: 3; Jer. 52: 31.

⁴ Luke 23: 42.

⁵ Josh. 2: 12; 1 Sam. 20: 14; 2 Sam. 9: 1;

1 Kings 2: 7.

⁶ Gen. 39: 20.

eagerly must Joseph have awaited the result! But no; "the chief butler forgot him." The two years of prison life that followed, made still darker by this neglect and ingratitude, must have been the saddest of Joseph's career.

LIGHT FROM THE CLOUD. "The ingratitude of the butler, inexcusable as it was, left Joseph in the prison until the moment came when he would be needed for a work of stupendous importance. While God's purposes were slowly ripening in the world outside, Joseph's character also was ripening into strength and self-discipline within the dungeon walls." — *J. R. Miller*. If the cupbearer had reported Joseph's case to the king earlier, "it does not seem that Pharaoh would have done more for him than transfer him to some other department in which he would have been still a slave, or at the most give him liberty to return to Canaan, to his father's house and the persecution of his brothers, and in either case he would have gone forth to obscurity." — *W. M. Taylor*.

"Be patient! oh, be patient! — though yet our hopes are green,
The harvest-fields of freedom shall be crowned with sunny sheen." — *Trench*.

LESSONS JOSEPH LEARNED IN THE SCHOOL OF ADVERSITY.

1. "The iron crown of suffering precedes the golden crown of glory." — *F. B. Meyer*. "Take out of your own life all your difficulties, all that ever pained, agitated, depressed you, all that disappointed or postponed your expectations, all that suddenly called upon you to act in trying situations, all that thoroughly put you to the proof — take all this away, and what do you leave but a blank, insipid life that not even yourself can see any interest in?" — *Expositor's Bible*.

2. Jesus learned, as the Prayer-book version of the Psalm has it, to "tarry the Lord's leisure." He learned to trust God's providences. Life has no higher lesson for any man.

"He who walks in virtue's way,
Firm and fearless, walketh surely;
Diligent while yet 'tis day,
On he speeds, and speeds securely." — *Bowring*.

3. Joseph learned to make the most of circumstances, to take advantages of opportunities, however slight they might be. Thus he was ready for the great opportunity when it came.

4. Through it all, Joseph kept sweet. He did not pose as a martyr. He did not lose his sympathy with others and grow misanthropic. He was a "prisoner of hope."

"Noble souls, through dust and heat
Rise from disaster and defeat
The stronger."
— *Longfellow*.

"I like the man who faces what he must
With step triumphant and a heart of cheer,
Who fights the daily battle without fear,
Sees his hopes fail, yet keeps unflinching trust."
— *Sarah K. Bolton*.

LESSON V. — May 5.

JOSEPH THE WISE RULER IN EGYPT.

Genesis 41: 38-49.

COMMIT vs. 38-40. READ Genesis 41-43.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God.* — JAS. 1: 5.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. Read the account of Pharaoh's dreams, the attempts of the wise men, and Joseph's interpretation, Gen. 41: 1-37.

2. Compare the story of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel, Daniel 2.

3. Compare also the story of the hand-writing on the wall, Daniel 5.

4. With Joseph's sudden rise to power compare Daniel's, and also Haman's fall and Mordecai's rise in Esther 6, 7.

5. Read the account of the famine and

Joseph's exaltation in Psa. 105: 16-22; Acts 7: 9-11.

6. Compare the account of the famine in the days of Abraham, Gen. 12: 10; Isaac, Gen. 26: 1; the judges, Ruth 1: 1; David, 2 Sam. 21: 1; Elijah, 1 Kings 17, 18; Elisha, 2 Kings 8: 1; Amos, Amos 4: 6-10; Jeremiah, Jer. 14; Lam. 1: 11; 2: 11, 20; 4: 4-10.

7. Continuing the comparison of Joseph with Christ, read John 6: 32-35.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 38-40; Jas. 1: 12; Prov. 22: 29;

Psa. 91: 14, 15.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Primary Department. — Draw a circle, representing Joseph's prison, while you review the last lesson. As you bring out the steps of Joseph's advancement, transform the circle into a signet ring with a brilliant red stone, and write alongside it, at the dictation of the scholars, the reasons for Joseph's success.

Intermediate Department. — Ask each scholar to bring to the class a list of causes for Joseph's success, and from these lists, as they are read, construct a model list. Get one scholar to read portions of "The Famine," in Longfellow's *Hiawatha*. Let another scholar give particulars of some recent famine in India or China.

Senior Department. — Two members of the class will come prepared to debate on opposite sides the question, "Were Joseph's measures with regard to the famine just?" Assign to others some applications of the lesson to modern times, especially to methods of charity, and to "paternal" governments.

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Compare with Pharaoh's other Bible dreams.

What use may we wisely make of dreams?

The causes of Joseph's success.

How did Joseph show himself a statesman?

The causes of the years of plenty and of famine.

The providential steps that led to Joseph's elevation.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Joseph's Opportunities and How He Used Them.

I. PHARAOH'S DREAMS: JOSEPH'S OPPORTUNITY COMES AT LAST (Gen. 41: 1-14, first clause).

The dream of the kine.

The dream of the wheat.

Illustrations of famous dreams.

The failure of Pharaoh's wise men.

The chief butler's awakened memory.

II. JOSEPH'S WISE INTERPRETATION AND SOUND ADVICE (Gen. 41: 14-36).

The preparation for appearing before Pharaoh.

Joseph acknowledges Jehovah before Pharaoh.

A wise interpretation and a sagacious policy.

III. JOSEPH'S EXALTATION: A VAST OPPORTUNITY FOR GOOD (vs. 37-45).

The sudden promotion.

Historical parallels.

The induction into office.

Joseph's Egyptian wife.

The new life into which Joseph entered.

IV. THE GREAT OPPORTUNITY NOBLY USED: JOSEPH SAVES THE NATION (vs. 46-57; Gen. 47: 13-26).

The establishing of national storehouses.

The seven years of plenty, and their cause.

The seven years of famine and their cause.

Similar famines of history.

The effect of Joseph's policy upon the national life.

OUR OPPORTUNITIES AND HOW TO USE THEM.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — B. C. 1716 (Ussher), two years after the release of Pharaoh's chief butler, to B. C. 1707, when Joseph was made known to his brethren; seven years of

plenty and two years of famine. See Gen. 45: 11.

Place. — The capital of Egypt at this time was either Zoan (the modern Sân), near one of the mouths of the Nile, or Heliopolis (On), six or seven miles north-east of modern Cairo.

Persons. — Joseph, 30 to 39 years old. Jacob, still living with his eleven sons at Hebron, 121 to 130 years of age (Gen. 47: 9).

Place in History. — The Pharaoh of Egypt was probably one of the third and last Hyksos dynasty, and possibly the last Hyksos king, Apepi.

HYMNS OF THE AGES.

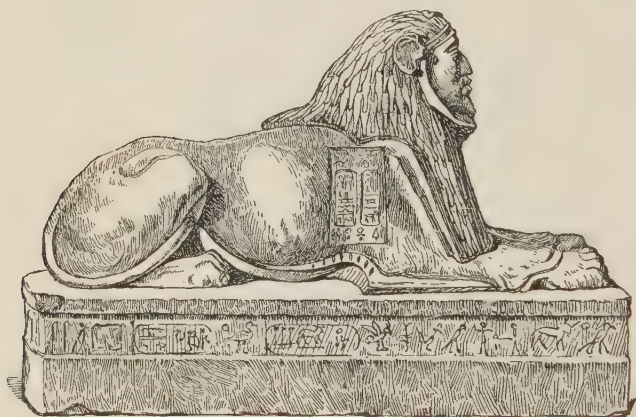
Bishop Heber's "Bread of the world, in mercy broken." Needham's "Rise, O my soul! pursue the path by ancient worthies, trod."

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The books referred to in the last lesson. Kellogg's *Abraham, Joseph, and Moses in Egypt* has an elaborate discussion of the date. See also Tomkins's *The Life and Times of Joseph*. Canon Cook's essay on the Egyptian words in the Pentateuch, in *The Speaker's Commentary*. A valuable chapter in Stanley's *History of the Jewish Church*. Robertson's *Sermons*, First Series, No. 21. Article in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July, 1897, by Hon. James Monroe, LL. D., on Joseph as a statesman.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

"Joseph," by John Henry Newman.
"Joseph," by Mrs. C. F. Alexander.
Olney Hymns, by John Newton, Hymn XI.
Picture of the famine in Fanny Crosby's
"The Meeting of Jacob and Joseph."
"The Famine," in Longfellow's *Hiawatha*.
"Joseph's History," by Richard Wilton.



Sphinx of Zoan, with the Portrait of a Shepherd King.

"To be a great man," said Rochefoucauld, "it is necessary to turn to account all opportunities"; and it has been truly said that most men deal with opportunities as children play with sand on the seashore, filling their hands with it, and then letting the grains fall through one by one until they are gone. That was not Joseph's way, as we shall see in this lesson.

I. Pharaoh's Dreams : Joseph's Opportunity Comes at Last. — Gen. 41: 1-14, first clause. After Joseph had been in

prison for three years, for a third time dreams entered his life as a controlling factor. This time it was the dreams of Pharaoh, who saw in his sleep seven fat cows — the cow was a sacred animal to the Egyptians — coming up out of the one river of the country, the great Nile, whose annual floods were, and are, the sole source of the fertility of the land. They fed upon the reed grass which then was abundant on the banks of the river, but since has disappeared; and after them came up seven very lean cows, which devoured the fat ones, but remained as lean as ever.

Dreams often come double, and a similar dream immediately followed. Pharaoh saw a great stalk of wheat, bearing seven full ears. "The plant dreamed of was perhaps the *Triticum compositum*, or compound wheat, the species usually grown in Egypt at the present day. It bears on its stalk not seven ears, but an ear branching into several spikes." — Sharpe's "Texts Explained." Egyptian wheat often brings forth the "hundredfold" of which Christ spoke in his parable. There sprung up after this a stalk with seven thin ears, which devoured the fat ears. These thin ears had been blasted by the east (southeast)

38. And Phā'raōh said unto his servants, Can we find ^{such a one} as this, ^{is,} a man ^{is?} ^{is?} ^{is?} in whom the Spirit of God ^{is?} ^{is?} ^{is?}

¹ Num. 27: 18; Job 32: 8.

wind, which to this day is the curse of the land, since it "is due to want of rain in the equatorial regions, and means that the next year's Nile will be low." — *Sayce*.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF FAMOUS DREAMS. The Greek and Latin classics contain many instances of remarkable dreams, as of Julius Cæsar's wife Calpurnia, and the dream of Brutus before his last battle. Clytemnestra had prescience of the fall of Troy, in the Agamemnon of Æschylus. "A tablet on the breast of the great Sphinx commemorates a remarkable dream of Thothmes IV." — *Tomkins*. Even Benjamin Franklin, in modern times, is said to have believed that he was instructed supernaturally in his dreams concerning the issue of current events. God sometimes speaks to the soul very clearly when it is thus withdrawn from outward distractions. This is of course not to countenance at all the superstitious use of trifling and meaningless dreams in which some foolish persons indulge.

As to the interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams, "we rather wonder that the magicians and the wise men should have been baffled by what seems to us so plain. But it is only another illustration of the truth so humorously enforced in the well-known story of Columbus and the egg. It is easy to open a lock when you have found the key." — *W. M. Taylor*. In the failure of the official dream-interpreters the cupbearer was reminded at last of Joseph, and with proper shame over his ungrateful forgetfulness, he told his royal master about his quondam fellow prisoner. With the impatience so characteristic of despotic rulers, Pharaoh sent in hot haste to the prison. Joseph's opportunity had come at last!

OPPORTUNITIES. Life chances come in ways we never expect. "Joseph might have ranged the plains of his native Mesopotamia in wild freedom for a hundred years and never have found such a chance of promotion as came to him within the precincts of that gloomy and stifling dungeon." — *Matheson*.

"A wise man," said Bacon, "will make more opportunities than he finds." This opportunity of Joseph's was half made by himself, by his kindness and ready helpfulness, and half furnished by Providence.

II. Joseph's Wise Interpretation and Sound Advice. — Gen. 41: 14-36. An indication of coming success is Joseph's humility. "It is not in me," he said modestly, when told of the task before him; "God shall give Pharaoh an answer." "On the one hand humility, on the other faith. These two should always go together, and the union of the two secures the co-operation of Jehovah." — *W. M. Taylor*.

Joseph's interpretation of the dreams was clear and entirely satisfactory. Like all really wise men, he spoke simply, and with no pompous mystification such as the magicians might have used to cloak their uncertainty. The dreams were doubled, he said, in token of something immediate and inevitable. Both dreams, however, meant the same, that seven years of plenty were to be followed by seven years of famine.

Insight is not enough for success. An ordinary man would certainly have stopped here; but Joseph showed his statesmanlike qualities by going on from dream-interpretation to the unfolding of a masterly public policy that must have impressed the king and the court far more than his solution of the dream-riddle. Let the surplus of the years of plenty be stored for use during the years of famine. This advice was far more remarkable in the improvident East than it would be with us. Moreover, Joseph advised that the fourteen years' operation should be put in the hands of a single suitable person, with a full force of assistants. "It is impossible to suppose that it entered Joseph's head that he might be the man appointed — a Hebrew, a slave, a prisoner, an untried youth amid all these tried ministers of state." — *Dods*.

THE STEPS OF JOSEPH'S ADVANCEMENT are very clear, and may be followed by any young man desirous of "getting along in the world." (1) He was not discouraged and downcast by adverse circumstances. (2) He did his best wherever he was. (3) He made friends by his readiness to help. (4) He trusted God, and was always ready to acknowledge him. (5) He was modest, and waited for others to suggest his advancement. (6) He was patient, and waited God's good time. (7) He made use of the little opportunities, and so was all ready for the great ones when they arrived.

III. Joseph's Exaltation: a Vast Opportunity for Good. — Vs. 37-45. Joseph's plans commended themselves at once to Pharaoh and his councillors. "Plainly

39. And Phā'raōh said unto Jō'seph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, ^{there is} none so discreet and wise as thou, ^{art}:

40. ¹ Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people ^a be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.

41. And Phā'raōh said unto Jō'seph, See, I have ² set thee over all the land of E'gypt.

42. And Phā'raōh ³ took off his ^{signet} ring from his hand, and put it upon Jō'seph's hand, and ⁴ arrayed him in vestures of ^b fine linen, ⁵ and put a gold chain about his neck;

¹ Psa. 105: 21; Acts 7: 10.

⁴ Esth. 8: 15.

^a Or, order themselves, or, do homage.

² Dan. 6: 3.

⁵ Dan. 5: 7, 29.

^b Or, cotton.

they were impressed with Joseph; almost supernaturally impressed, and felt God through him." — *Expositor's Bible*.

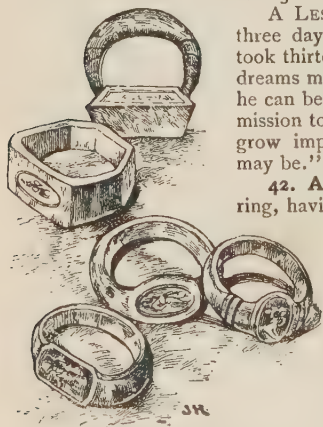
38. And Pharaoh said . . . Can we find such a one? Such a wise executive as Joseph had shown to be needed. A man in whom the Spirit of God is. "Pharaoh and his court, recognizing the interpretation of dreams as a divine gift, and tracing all insight into the future as sent from above, could have no one so fit to put in the highest authority as a man thus inspired." — *Geikie*.

39. God hath shewed thee all this. Joseph's fidelity to Jehovah was a step in his advancement, as Pharaoh saw that the God who had once disclosed the future to Joseph would guide him in the coming years. "Them that honor me I will honor."

40. Thou shalt be over my house. Not merely over the palace, but over the entire kingdom. "There are three things required to fit a man to rule: intellectual power, a sense of dependence upon God, and unselfishness. All these were combined in Joseph." — *Robertson*. "It was no unheard-of thing for a Syrian to be thus raised to the highest offices of the Egyptian state, and in the days of Hyksos domination it was naturally easier than when a dynasty of purely native origin was on the throne. . . . For many centuries during the Mohammedan age none but a slave could govern Egypt." — *Sayce*. The stories of Daniel and Mordecai illustrate the possibility of such sudden elevation in Eastern lands. In 1852 the prime-minister of Persia, the second in rank in the kingdom but the first in power, was the son of a donkey-driver. The Sultan of Turkey once had a toothache, and his private dentist was off hunting. A certain poor, starving dentist was hastily found. He did the work, and was immediately made a peer of the realm, and given two palaces and a large income. The sudden change unbalanced his mind and he tried to shoot an admiral. Immediately the Sultan thrust him back again into his little dentist-shop, there to pull teeth for 25 cents each!

A LESSON OF PATIENCE. "The butler's dream came true in three days, but there was not much of it when it was fulfilled. It took thirteen years for Joseph's dreams to be realized, because the dreams meant so much. If a man's work is of small importance, he can be prepared for it in a little while. But when he has a great mission to fulfil, it requires a long time to fit him for it. Let no one grow impatient in God's school, however slow the advancement may be." — *J. R. Miller*.

42. And Pharaoh took off his ring. "A heavy gold signet ring, having the sacred beetle and mystic words engraved upon a large precious stone, the ring with which he sealed his orders, which seal was kissed by all who received it." — *Bird*. "Joseph would get the king's secretaries to write any decree he might like to dictate, would rub ink with his finger on the seal, press it on the papyrus roll, and it became a royal decree." — *Hurlbut*. "These rings were not always finger-rings, but were often worn as bracelets. In the East, the seal alone has the effect which we give to both the seal and the signature." — *Kitto*. This is necessary, since most of those who should sign, or to whom a document or order



Egyptian Rings and Seals.

43. ^{And} he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; ¹ and they cried before him, ^a Bow the knee: and he ^{made him ruler} ^{set him} ² over all the land of E'gypt.

44. And Phā'raōh said unto Jō'seph, I ^{am} ^{an} Phā'raōh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or ^{his} foot in all the land of E'gypt.

45. And Phā'raōh called Jō'seph's name ^b Zaph'nath-pa-a ne'ah; ^{Zaph'e-nath-pa-ne'ah;} and he gave him to wife As'e-nāth the daughter of ^{Po-ti'-phe-rah} ^c priest of On. And Jō'seph went out over ^{all} the land of E'gypt.

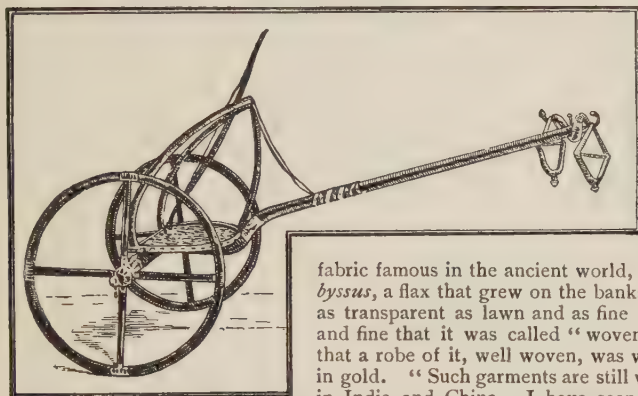
¹ Esth. 6: 9.

² Gen. 42: 6; Acts 7: 10.

^a *Abreck*, probably, an Egyptian word similar in sound to the Hebrew word meaning to kneel.

^b Which in the Coptic signifies, *A revealer of secrets, or, The man to whom secrets are revealed.*

^c Or, *prince*, Ex. 2: 16; 2 Sam. 8: 18.



Egyptian Chariot Made of Orange-wood and Leather.

IN THE MUSEUM, FLORENCE.

was sent, could not read or write.

"The signet-ring was the symbol of authority. Alexander, when dying, took off his ring and gave it to Perdicas." — *Dods*.

Arrayed him in . . . fine linen. A costly

fabric famous in the ancient world, made of the Egyptian *byssus*, a flax that grew on the banks of the Nile. It was as transparent as lawn and as fine as silk, so transparent and fine that it was called "woven air," and Pliny said that a robe of it, well woven, was worth twice its weight in gold. "Such garments are still worn indoors by ladies in India and China. I have seen some so transparent that when spread on the grass they were not readily discernible." — *Clarke*. "It was extremely soft and of dazzling whiteness." — *Trench*. "The delicacy of the Egyptian linen may be judged from the fact that

whereas the finest linen in India—the finest now in the world—has only 100 threads to an inch, that of Egypt had at times 140 threads to an inch." — *Sir J. G. Wilkinson*. Herodotus says that sometimes each thread was composed of 360 strands. "Dresses of this fine fabric were allowed to be worn only by persons of the highest rank and distinction in Egypt." — *Kitto*. "The garments of Byssus belong necessarily to the naturalizing of Joseph." — *Hengstenberg*. **And put a gold chain about his neck.** "A badge of high office, as now in England mayors have jeweled chains as a badge of office. The Egyptian monuments and wall-paintings show that the gold chain was worn by persons of distinction. It was especially the badge of office worn by the judge and the prime minister." — *Pulpit Commentary*. "Ancient necklaces of such exquisite workmanship have been discovered in Egypt that patterns copied from them are common now at the chief jewelers." — *Handy Commentary*.

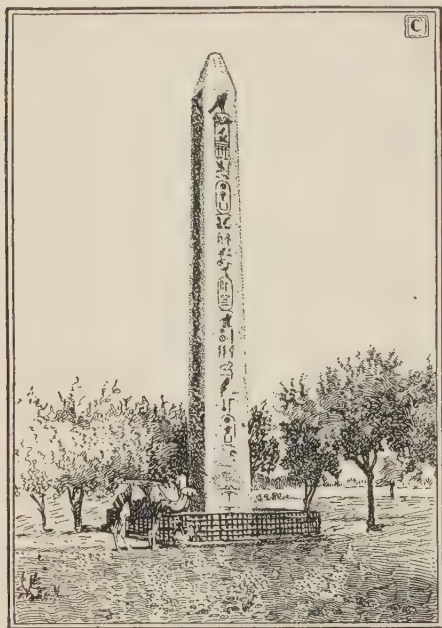
43. **He made him to ride in the second chariot.** "In the Pharaoh's presence none was allowed to appear in his own chariot except in battle; it was the duty of the subject to stand before his sovereign on foot." — *Sayce*. As Joseph was conducted with a splendid procession through the city, **they cried before him, Bow the knee.** "The cry of the heralds was 'Abrek!' a word which has never yet received a fully-accepted explanation." — *Tomkins*. Brugsch explains it by the Egyptian word *bark*, meaning to kneel, to adore. Renouf considers that it means, "We are at thy service." *Sayce* derives it from the Assyrian, and interprets it "seer." Chabas says it is the same word as is still used when a camel is made to kneel.

45. As still another token of his adoption as an Egyptian, Pharaoh changed Joseph's name to **Zaphnath-paaneah**. "This Egyptian name has been variously interpreted 'revealer of secrets,' 'food of the living,' and 'governor of the district of the city of life,'

46. And Jō'seph ^{was} thirty years old when he ¹ stood before Phā'raōh king of E'gypt. And Jō'seph went out from the presence of Phā'raōh, and went throughout all the land of E'gypt.

47. And in the seven plenteous years the earth brought forth by handfuls.

1 Sam. 16: 21; 1 Kings 12: 6, 8.



From a Photograph by Bonfils.

Obelisk at Heliopolis, of the Temple of the Sun.

palace. He dressed in the most beautiful attire, and he had servants to minister to his every wish. He had unbounded power, and his word was law throughout the greatest kingdom of the world. His dreams had come true.

2. But he could not have been free from anxiety. He must have made many enemies by his sudden rise to power over the heads of so many noblemen and officials. His exalted position would arouse envy. He had assumed a very difficult task, which must have presented a thousand perplexities.

3. So that Joseph's new life was not one of ease. Probably no one in the kingdom worked harder than the new prime minister through all those fourteen years. That, indeed, was his chance, — the opportunity to do a great and difficult work that would bless the whole world. That is the best kind of chance to have.

IV. The Great Opportunity Nobly Used: Joseph Saves the Nation. — Vs. 46-57; Gen. 47: 13-26. 46. Joseph, when he entered upon his great task, was thirty years old, so that he had been thirteen years in servitude, since he was seventeen years old when sold into Egypt. Immediately on receiving his commission, he went out from the presence of Pharaoh, not remaining among the novel delights and pleasures of the court, but going vigorously to work. His first step was to go throughout all the land of Egypt, deciding where to place the vast storehouses that would be required, and issuing orders for their construction.

47. As Joseph had prophesied, in the seven plenteous years the earth brought

a name given to a city near Zoan." — *Dods*. The last part, at any rate, means "the life," and so the name was most appropriate. Still further to naturalize Joseph, Pharaoh gave him an Egyptian wife, **Asenath**, whose name may mean "the favorite of Neith," the Egyptian Minerva. **Daughter of Poti-pherah**, signifying "consecrated to Ra," the sun-god, whose worship had its center at **On**, called in Greek Heliopolis, "the city of the sun." See *Place*. The two obelisks called Cleopatra's Needles, one of which is now in London and the other in Central Park, New York, came originally from this city. In Egypt the wife's rank was extended to the husband, and Joseph's marriage with the daughter of the Egyptian high-priest, who ranked next to Pharaoh, placed him on an equality with the proudest nobles of the land. If, as is very likely, Joseph's Pharaoh was Apepi, the last of the Hyksos kings, he was a monotheist, and "we may the better understand how Joseph might retain in Egypt the worship of his father's God, and might marry the daughter of the priest of On, without coming into violent collision with the worship practised by the king."

— *Blakie*.

JOSEPH'S CHANCE. 1. The former shepherd boy lived now in a splendid

48. And he gathered up all the food of the seven years' which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which ^{was} round about every city, laid he up in the same.

49. And Joseph ^{gathered} ^{laid up} corn ^{as} the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for ^{it was} without number.

1 Gen. 22: 17; Judg. 7: 12; 1 Sam. 13: 5; Psal. 78: 27.

forth by handfuls, a kernel, or perhaps a stalk, yielding a handful. Egypt was at that time the world's granary, and it still exports a considerable amount of wheat.

THE CAUSE OF THE YEARS OF PLENTY. Egypt's fertility is due to the floods of the Nile, which irrigate the dry territory over which they spread, and at the same time cover the ground with a layer of rich loam brought down from the mountains above. During these seven years "the rains in Abyssinia were abundant, the Nile rose to an unwonted height, the deposits of the water were perhaps unusually rich and spread over an unusually large area, and the people sowed large quantities of grain, and reaped very abundant harvests." — *Thorndy Smith*. Osburn, in his *Monumental History of Egypt*, advances the theory that the exceptional floods were caused by the breaking of the barriers of a great lake which existed in upper Egypt, but during those seven years gradually wore away its banks.

HOW THE GREAT HARVESTS WERE UTILIZED. 48. Joseph carried out his plan, and gathered up all the food of the seven years. All that was obtainable, in addition to the fifth part, which was taken as the king's tax. An immense supply was thus laid up in the storehouses throughout Egypt, so much that (v. 49) the officers in charge ceased to keep a reckoning of it.

A PRACTICAL HINT. "In every one's life there are seasons of rare plenty, and there will come seasons that are full of need. It is wisdom's part to gather the avails of the full years and lay them up in store for the empty years." — *J. R. Miller*. Thus in youth we should lay up for after years a store of health, knowledge, and good principles. When we can earn money, we should "lay by for a rainy day." On earth we should lay up treasures in heaven.

THE SEVEN YEARS OF FAMINE must have been caused, so far as Egypt was concerned, by the absence of the usual overflow of the Nile; but "the drought reached the neighboring countries also. Ethiopia, Arabia, Palestine, and Syria would be especially affected by it." — *Speaker's Commentary*. Sir Samuel Baker, the distinguished explorer of Africa, thought that hostile Ethiopians might have caused the disastrous lowering of the Nile by turning away the Athbara River, which flows into the Nile from Abyssinia. The wide spread of the drought, however, can be accounted for only by a universal scarcity of rain.

SIMILAR FAMINES OF HISTORY. "A succession of low Niles is no unheard-of event in Egyptian history. The land is suffering from one to-day, and in the eleventh century (A. D. 1064 to 1071) there was a famine which lasted, like that of Joseph, for seven years, caused by a deficient Nile. A hieroglyphic inscription engraved in the age of the Ptolemies on a rock near the First Cataract similarly tells us of another famine that was wasting the country because 'the Nile flood had not come for seven years.' In the Middle Ages, indeed, famines took place of such terrible severity that women even ate their own children for food." — *Sayce*. An Arabian historian quoted by Stanley describes such a famine in the twelfth century: "The road between Egypt and Syria was like a vast field sown with human bodies. It had become as a banquet-hall for the birds, wild beasts, and dogs, which gorged on their flesh." "There is a record of one famine which many, among them Brugsch, have identified with the time of Joseph. In a tomb at El-Kab, an inscription of the governor, named Baba, states that he, in the great famine which came upon his people, dealt out to them grain which he had stored away in times of plenty." — *Prof. Ira M. Price*.

WAS JOSEPH'S POLICY JUST? He sold the grain to the starving people, and there is no indication that he sold it at starvation prices. To have given it away would have pauperized the people, and injured their character irretrievably. So the British government, in dealing with the terrible famines in India, enters upon large public works upon which the needy natives are employed, that they may earn money to buy bread. But then, when the money gave out, Joseph took the people's domestic animals in return for wheat; then took their land, and at last themselves, emphasizing the final purchase by gathering the rural population in the cities, probably for convenience in feeding them. Thus Joseph brought

about a complete revolution in the social condition of the nation; everything now belonged to Pharaoh. The monuments show that at the close of the Hyksos dynasty there was no private ownership of land, all Egyptians being mere tenants, paying to the king as taxes one-fifth part of the crops. This account in the Bible is the only explanation of how the great change came about.

In estimating the justice of this policy we must remember the unthriftiness of the people; the peculiar nature of the country, with its dependence upon the Nile; the prevalence of despotism in the ancient world; and especially the fact that the people who were concerned in the change heartily approved it, and hailed Joseph as their deliverer. Their taxes were low, for that rich soil, and in comparison with other Eastern lands even of the present day. "The taxes in Turkey are 50 per cent of the produce, and in Persia 75 per cent." — *Dillman*. Moreover, the nation, which had been weakened by many petty and hostile principalities, was consolidated into a strong nation. Joseph proved himself a constructive statesman of the first rank.

OUR OPPORTUNITIES AND HOW TO USE THEM.

We may learn for ourselves four important lessons from Joseph's great chance and the way he used it.

1. *It is never too early to begin to make ready for great opportunities.* Joseph the boy was father of Joseph the man. Take your motto from William Carey, the pioneer of modern missions: "Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God."

2. *Be sure that God will do his part, but will insist on your doing your part also.* That wonderful power of electricity which gives us wireless telegraphy was in the world from the beginning, waiting for some one to see the opportunity it afforded; and at last Marconi saw it.

3. *Make use of little opportunities as if they were great; you never can tell but they may turn out to be great.* Edison chanced to catch what he fancied was a voice-like tone from a vibrating plate; that trifling hint grew into the marvellous phonograph.

4. *Most important of all, accept God's idea of what constitutes a really great opportunity.* It is not the chance to make money or get fame, but the chance to do good. That was Joseph's opportunity, and he had it all along. In his slavery he was just as successful as in his ruling; and God would have counted him a successful man even if he had remained a slave for the rest of his days.

LESSON VI. — May 12.

JOSEPH FORGIVES HIS BROTHERS.

Genesis 45: 1-15; 50: 15-21.

COMMIT vs. 4, 5. READ Genesis 44-50.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.* — *EPH. 4: 32.*

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. Read the entire story of Joseph's dealing with his brothers, Genesis 42-50.

2. Compare *Psa. 105: 21-24; Acts 7: 9-16.*

3. Compare Jacob's gift to Joseph with the way he sought to placate Esau, *Gen. 32: 13-21.* Compare it also with the goods of the Midianites to whom Joseph was sold, *Gen. 37: 25.*

4. In connection with Joseph's weeping, see other instances of men's weeping under strong emotion: *Esau, Gen. 27: 38; Jacob, Gen. 29: 11; 33: 4; 37: 35; Jonathan and David, 1 Sam. 20: 41; 2 Sam. 1: 12; 3: 32; Saul, 1 Sam. 24: 16, and many others.*

5. Study the leading Bible passages on forgiveness, such as *Matt. 6: 12-15; Luke 18: 9-14; Psa. 8: 14.*

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 4, 5; Psal. 37: 18, 19; 103: 12, 13; Matt. 6: 12-15.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Primary Department.—Make the lesson more vivid by calling one side of the room Hebron, the opposite side, Egypt; one corner, Joseph's palace, the opposite corner, the prison. Assign the different characters to the children, and have them represent the scenes in dumb show as the story is told.

Intermediate Department.—Ask the scholars, in their home study, to divide the section into twelve scenes and write out a statement of what each scene shows regarding the progress of the brothers toward right thinking.

Senior Department.—Assign topics for brief talks, asking one member of the class to make the lesson a study of repentance; others, a study of providence, a study of tact, a study of family life, a study of forgiveness. Various difficult questions may be raised for general discussion, such as, "Why did not Joseph send word of his safety to his father?" "Why did he not sooner disclose himself to his brothers?" "What are we to think about the presence of the divining cup?" "Was Joseph justified in acting a part?"

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Reasons why Joseph did not sooner disclose himself to his brothers.

The steps that led Joseph's brothers to repentance.

A study of God's providences in these events.

What event in Joseph's life was the most important?

What element in Joseph's character most impresses you?

What is the most important lesson to be learned from Joseph's life?

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—B. C. 1707 (Ussher). The second year of the famine, and 22 years after the sale of Joseph by his brethren. Joseph was now 39 years old and Benjamin about 25.

Place.—Heliopolis in Egypt, on the Nile, near the head of the Delta, or Zoan (Tanis), near the outlet of the Tanitic mouth of the Nile. It was about 250 miles from Hebron, Jacob's home.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Twelve Steps in the Bet-tering of Joseph's Brothers.

FIRST STEP: *the Pressure of Famine* (Gen. 42: 1-3).

SECOND STEP: *Joseph's Rough Dealing* (Gen. 42: 4-16).

THIRD STEP: *Imprisonment* (Gen. 42: 17-24).

FOURTH STEP: *the Mystery of the Money* (Gen. 42: 25-38).

FIFTH STEP: *the Sorrowful Father* (Gen. 43: 1-14).

SIXTH STEP: *Benjamin Honored* (Gen. 43: 15-34).

SEVENTH STEP: *Benjamin's Peril* (Gen. 44: 1-13).

EIGHTH STEP: *Judah's Appeal* (Gen. 44: 14-34).

NINTH STEP: *Joseph's Disclosure of Himself* (vs. 1-4).

TENTH STEP: *Joseph's Disclosure of Providence* (vs. 5-8).

ELEVENTH STEP: *Joseph Sends for His Father* (vs. 9-13).

TWELFTH STEP: *the Reunited Brothers* (vs. 14, 15; Gen. 50: 15-21).

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Commentaries and works on Joseph referred to in preceding lessons. Article on Goshen in Hastings's *Bible Dictionary*. Sermons by Spurgeon, Trench (*Sermons New and Old*), and Robertson (*Fifth Series*). Chapter XIV. of Rawlinson's *Egypt and Babylon*. *Monumental Egypt*, by Osburn. *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, by Wilkinson. *Ancient Egypt under the Pharaohs*, by Kendrick. *Egyptian Chronicles*, by Palmer. *Egypt under the Pharaohs*, by Brugsch. *Egypt of the Hebrews and Herodotus and Early Israel and the Surrounding Nations*, by Sayce.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

"Joseph and His Brethren," by Catharine Hankey. John Newton's *Olney Hymns*, XII. Fanny Crosby's "The Meeting of Jacob and Joseph." "Forgiveness," by Whittier. "Never Hold Malice," by Eliza Cook. Quarles, *Divine Fancies*, I., 75. "Jacob and Pharaoh," by James Grahame.

HYMNS OF THE AGES.

"Just as I am." Wesley's "Oh, for that tenderness of heart That bows before the Lord."

TWELVE STEPS IN THE BETTERING OF JOSEPH'S BROTHERS.

We are now to trace the steps by which Joseph's brothers were transformed from haters into lovers. We left them, a set of bitter-hearted, cruel men, with virtual murder on their souls and their brother's bloody garment in their hands, telling their old father a lie that meant, they knew, his lifelong sorrow. Yet those same men were to be the ancestors of God's chosen people. One was to be the father of the priesthood of the world's one true religion. Another was to number among his descendants David and Jesus Christ. It is a beautiful story to learn, the way they were made in some degree fit for this great charge.

First Step: the Pressure of Famine.—Gen. 42: 1-3. Some of those who greatly admired the character of Joseph have been compelled to think he did wrong in not notifying his old father of his safety during those nine years when as prime minister he certainly had power to communicate with him. In view, however, of the yearning affection which Joseph afterward showed, we may well believe that he realized how little good would be accomplished by such a course while his brothers' hearts remained hard. His elevation would only embitter them the more, and the result might be another tragedy. Besides, Joseph may have anticipated just what happened, the spread of the great drought to his own land, and the pressure of famine drawing his brothers within his own sphere of influence. There is a legend that Joseph had the masses of straw from the harvests cast into the Nile, that they might float out into the Mediterranean, and notify other lands where plenty was to be found. This he did, the legend says, for the sake of his father.

The graphic narrative pictures the downcast looks of Jacob's sons as the fields began to fail, their cattle to die, and their dear ones to grow wasted with want. There is nothing like the pressure of need to bring a man to repentance, and our misfortunes are often sent us with that kind end in view. The speeches of Job's friends emphasize this truth.

Second Step: Joseph's Rough Dealing.—Gen. 42: 4-16. Even in his old age, Jacob's energy shows itself, and it is he that proposes an expedition to get food from Egypt. The youngest, Benjamin, was alone retained at home. The ten brothers found Joseph superintending in person the sale of wheat. Perhaps it was his habit to be present at sales to men of Palestine, in the hope that his brothers might be among them. His new name, his position, and the changes wrought by time, concealed him effectively from his brothers; but he knew them at once. As they bowed humbly before him, his boyhood dreams must have rushed to mind; but the narrative betrays no exultation. Hiding his joy, Joseph roughly brought against them the preposterous accusation that they were spies. Meyer believes that in this scene Joseph "repeated exactly the scene at the pit's mouth" in Dothan, charging them with being spies just as they, twenty-two years before, had rushed upon him, accusing him of coming to spy upon them and carry more tales to his father. This striking suggestion may well be true; and in any case, the rough treatment had a salutary effect. The brothers were not ready to appreciate kindness.

Third Step: Imprisonment.—Gen. 42: 17-24. Joseph's dramatic reminders of what had passed continued. As they had thrust him into the pit, he thrust them into the horrors of an Egyptian prison. And now we begin to see the awakening of their consciences. Their own distress reminds them of Joseph's cries, which for twenty-two years they had been trying to drown in forgetfulness. As Joseph overhears their first admission of wrong-doing, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother," he has difficulty in maintaining his assumed sternness. He drives home the lesson, however, by binding Simeon before their eyes, "choosing him, probably, as the one chiefly guilty of the wrong done him."—*Ellicott*.

Fourth Step: The Mystery of the Money.—Gen. 42: 25-38. Sometimes consciences that are not aroused by adversity are awakened by strangeness and mystery. This also was added for the bettering of the brothers. Joseph probably intended the return of their money as a kindness and encouragement, but it only increased their terror. One parcel of money was discovered on the way, being left in the mouth of a sack; but the rest of the money had been placed in the bottoms of the sacks, and was not found till they were emptied at home. On this discovery, as the literal Hebrew is, "their heart went forth, and they trembled each to his brother." "They feared that they were the victims of some conspiracy, and could not contemplate going back to Egypt without trepidation; but one good symptom in them was that now they began to think of the overruling Providence which before they had so greatly slighted; for they said, 'What is this that God hath done to us?'"—*W. M. Taylor*.

Fifth Step: the Sorrowful Father.—Gen. 43: 1-14. However reluctant the sons were to face again the terrible ruler of Egypt, and however Jacob dreaded to part with

his sole remaining consolation, Benjamin, the pressure of hunger was too great for them. With a sinking heart, Jacob agreed that Benjamin should go, being a little assured, perhaps, by Judah's manly promise to be surety for him. The entire conduct of the brothers shows that Jacob's long grief for Joseph had softened their hearts, and that they bore no grudge against Benjamin because he stood first in their father's affection, but rather shared their father's anxiety for Benjamin's safety. And thus much had been gained. So the sad little cavalcade set out once more, with money to buy a new supply of food and to replace what had been placed, perhaps by mistake, in the sacks, and also with such a present as the impoverished land could supply, — the same "spicery and balm and myrrh" that the Midianites who bought Joseph were carrying to Egypt, and other fruits that Egypt did not produce.

Sixth Step: Benjamin Honored. — Gen. 43: 15-34. A new surprise awaited the brothers in Egypt. Instead of being received roughly by the prime minister, they were invited to dine at the great man's house. "The mansions of noble Egyptians stood within high walls, decorated with paintings. A huge gate opened on a wide paved court-yard. A second high doorway at the back of this court led into the vast gardens of the mansion, with rows of fruit trees and trellised vines, clumps of shrubs, beds of flowers and of vegetables. At one side of this paradise rose the mansion, sometimes of vast extent." — *Geikie*. This invitation was a new terror. "A more natural picture of the conduct of men from the country, when taken into the house of a superior, cannot be drawn. When they are told to go inside, they at once suspect that they are about to be punished or confined." — *Roberts*, "*Oriental Illustrations*." The steward who relieved their fears seems to have obtained from Joseph a knowledge of Jehovah, telling them that it was the God of their fathers who had given them the treasure in their sacks. As a crowning reassurance, he brought out Simeon, safe and sound.

But the banquet that followed brought fresh mysteries. "The state of an Egyptian Grand Vizier was something of which till then they could have had no idea. The dining chamber was a decorated hall, resplendent with color and gilding, and furnished with regal magnificence." — *Geikie*. Flowers, troops of slaves, music, dancing, the richest viands, were features of the feast. Joseph sat apart, as befitted his rank, and the brothers were filled with amazement to find themselves placed at table in the precise order of their ages. As a special honor, Joseph sent food from his table to his brothers, sending five times as much to Benjamin as to the others. "That was a mark of his preference, almost as great as his father had shown him in giving him the coat of many colors; and we may be sure that if they had been envious of Benjamin they would have revealed it by their remarks upon his procedure." — *W. M. Taylor*. But they stood this test.

Seventh Step: Benjamin's Peril. — Gen. 44: 1-13. The affair of the divining cup was the most severe test of all. In the use of that instrument of superstition, "small pieces of gold or silver leaf or thin plate were thrown into the cup, intermingled with precious stones, on which certain characters were engraved. Then the inquirer repeated certain forms of adjuration and invoked his gods. The answer was variously given. Sometimes a voice was heard; sometimes certain of the signs engraved on the stones were seen reflected in the water; and sometimes the image of the person respecting whom inquiry was made appeared therein." — *Kitto*. There is no reason to suppose that Joseph engaged in such silly practices; but it was part of the plot to make out that Benjamin had stolen something very valuable and precious. The penalty applied to common thieves by Egyptian law was perpetual slavery, and that was the fate which confronted the horrified Benjamin when the cup was discovered in his sack.

"Had the brothers been of their old temper, their knives had very speedily proved that their contempt for the deed was as great as the Egyptian's; by violence toward Benjamin they might have cleared themselves of all suspicion of complicity." — *Expositor's Bible*. "The very men who had once sold their brother into slavery now for a brother's sake chose slavery for themselves." — *Sayce*. Most remarkable of all, they did not reproach Benjamin, but, if they believed him guilty, held their peace, as humbled men who knew that they themselves had much for which to answer.

Eighth Step: Judah's Appeal. — Gen. 44: 14-34. The examination before Joseph is a fit climax of the wonderful story. "Judah had thirsted for the blood of Joseph; it was Judah who now became the spokesman for the rest." — *Sayce*. "The speech of Judah, as he pleads for Benjamin, is one of the noblest pieces of natural eloquence in any literature, sacred or profane." — *J. R. Miller*. Especially noticeable in it is the tender regard for the aged father which breathes through every sentence. The brothers were indeed changed from the old days when they did not hesitate to inflict on Jacob a lifelong woe.

1. Then Jō'seph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Jō'seph made himself known unto his brethren.

2. And he ^awept aloud: and the E-gyp'tians ^{heard}, and the house of Phā'raōh heard.

3. And Jō'seph said unto his brethren, ¹ I ^{am} Jō'seph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were ^btroubled at his presence.

4. And Jō'seph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I ^{am} Jō'seph your brother, ² whom ye sold into E'gypt.

5. ^{Now therefore} ^{And now} ³ be not grieved, ^c nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: ⁴ for God did send me before you to preserve life.

¹ Acts 7: 13.

² Gen. 37: 28.

³ Isa. 40: 2; 2 Cor. 2: 7.

⁴ Gen. 50: 20; Psa. 105: 16, 17; 2 Sam. 16: 10, 11;

Acts 4: 27, 28.

^a Hebrew, gave forth his voice in weeping, Num. 14: 1.

^b Or, terrified, Job 4: 5; Matt. 14: 26; Mark 6: 50.

^c Hebrew, neither let there be anger in your eyes.

Ninth Step: Joseph's Disclosure of Himself.— Vs. 1-4. Joseph's severe tests had abundantly accomplished their purpose; they had shown his brothers, even the worst of them, to be changed men, whom he could trust. Therefore he no longer hesitates to disclose himself.

1. **Cause every man to go out from me.** Joseph felt that what was to come was "a transaction so tender and sacred that the presence of an observer could not but be regarded as a profanation."—*Delitzsch*.

2. **And he wept aloud.** Tears of joy, poured forth freely, as Orientals do. **The Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.** "The Egyptian officials of Joseph's house, who were standing outside, heard, and reported it to the house of Pharaoh."—*Pulpit Commentary*.

3. **I am Joseph.** "The natural voice, the native tongue, the long-remembered features, would all at once strike the apprehension of the brothers."—*Murphy*. **Doth my father yet live?** The eagerness of this question is a sufficient answer to the accusation that Joseph had forgotten his father during those years of exaltation. **They were troubled at his presence.** "It came with the suddenness of an unexpected blow. They were in the presence and power of one whom they had cruelly injured, and he seemed to have been playing with them as a cat does with a mouse."—*Sayce*.

4. **Come near to me.** "Probably in the first impulse of terror they had drawn away from him, as if to hide out of his sight."—*Vincent*. **I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.** "It was impossible to evade allusion to their early wickedness, and this Joseph does not in a spirit of angry upbraiding, but of elevated piety and tender charity."—*Pulpit Commentary*. So Jesus reminded Peter of his sin in order to make his forgiveness more complete.

JOSEPH'S OUTSTRETCHED ARMS. "Like Saul on the way to Damascus, hearing from the lips of Jesus only words of affection, they found their injured brother heaping coals of fire upon their heads."—*Blaikie*. The last barrier in their hearts must have broken down at the sight of their brother's outstretched arms. It is in this attitude that Thordalsen represented Christ, in the most appealing of all the statues of our Saviour.

Tenth Step: Joseph's Disclosure of Providence.— Vs. 5-8. The surgeon's task is not complete if he leaves an open wound. Wise dealing with sinners never ends when they repent. They must next be comforted, strengthened, lifted into a new confidence. This is what Joseph now does for his humbled brothers.

5. **Be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves.** "You cannot but have remarked that, conversant as Joseph's experience was with human treachery, no expressions of bitterness escape from him."—*F. W. Robertson*. "I can forgive, but never forget" is as far as many Christians of to-day go in regard to an injury. How small is such a position as we stand beside this Hebrew, who could not only forget, but could strive to make the wrongdoers forget! **For God did send me before you to preserve life.** "Had they

6. For these two years ^{hath} the famine ^{been} in the land: and ^{yet there are} five years, in the which ^{there shall} neither ^{be earring} nor harvest. ^{shall be} ^{plowing} ^{been} ^{there are yet}

7. And God sent me before you to preserve you a ^{posterity} in the earth, and to save ^{your lives} by a great deliverance. ^{you alive} ^{remnant}

8. So now ^{it was} not you ^{that} sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me ¹ a father to Phā'raōh, and lord of all his house, and ^a ruler ^{throughout} over all the land of E'gypt.

9. Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Jō'seph, God hath made me lord of all E'gypt: come down unto me, tarry not:

10. ^{And} ^{and} ² thou shalt dwell in the land of Gō'shen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

11. ^{And} there will I nourish thee; for ^{yet there are} five years of famine; ^{there are yet} lest thou ^{and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.}

12. And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Bēn'jamin, that ^{it is} ^{it is} ³ my mouth that speaketh unto you. ^{come to poverty, thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast.}

¹ Gen. 41: 43; Judg. 17: 10;
Job 29: 16.

² Gen. 47: 1.

³ Gen. 42: 23.

not been really penitent, it might have been dangerous to preach such doctrine to them." — *W. M. Taylor*. "But no further view of sin can lighten its heinousness to a really penitent sinner. Prove to him that his sin has become the means of untold good, and you only humble him the more." — *Expositor's Bible*.

6. Joseph was very modest in referring to the great work he had already done; and a still greater work remained, for the famine had yet five years to run. **Earring.** "An old English word for plowing, derived from the Latin, *arare*, Anglo-Saxon, *erian*, 'to plow.'" — *Ellicott*. "Earth" may be an allied word.

8. **A father to Pharaoh.** This was the title of Joseph's office. "The Caliphs and the Sultan of Turkey appear to have given the same title to their grand viziers." — *Speaker's Commentary*.

THE COMFORT OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE. The unrepentant and unforgiven sinner sees in God's providence only a merciless fate drawing ever more tightly around him. The soul reunited to God sees that the Father has been making even the wrath of man to praise him. Thus Luther condensed this passage: "You sold me, but God bought me for his good purposes." Three times did Joseph repeat that consolation. It did not make his brothers' sin any less, but what a comfort it was to know that God had overruled it for good!

Eleventh Step: Joseph Sends for His Father. — Vs. 9-13. The best way to help a repentant sinner is to give him some noble task to perform; and if it helps to undo some of the wrong he has done, so much the better. Such a task Joseph next proposed to his brothers.

9. **Haste ye.** Because (1) Jacob's sorrow had continued long enough, and (2) Joseph's love for his father had been restrained long enough. **God hath made me.** Not his own wisdom, not "good luck," not Pharaoh; but Joseph was wise enough to recognize God as the cause of his elevation. **Lord of all Egypt.** "This will not only be welcome news to Israel, but will explain why Joseph does not go to his father, instead of asking his father to come to him." — *Willis J. Beecher, D.D.* **Tarry not.** The twenty-two sad years of separation speak in those impetuous words.

10. **Thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen.** This region "lay on the eastern border of the Delta, and furnished excellent pasture. It evidently lay on the Syrian frontier (Gen. 46: 28), and was considered appropriate for the temporary settlement of foreigners. Then it is described as 'the best of the land' (Gen. 47: 6), that was no doubt from a shepherd's point of view." — *Hastings's Bible Dictionary*.

11. **And thy household.** "In v. 18 Joseph speaks of 'their households,' showing that each of the patriarchs had now his own body of dependents, besides the still larger clan which belonged to Jacob." — *Ellicott*.

12. Joseph realized that Jacob would be incredulous of the marvellous story; therefore

13. And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in E'gypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and ¹bring down my father hither.

14. And he fell upon his brother Bën'ja-min's neck, and wept; and Bën'ja-min wept upon his neck.

15. ^{Moreover} ^{And} he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.

50: 15. And when Jō'seph's brethren saw that their father was dead, ²they said, ^{Jo'seph will peradventure} ^{It may be that Jo'seph will} hate us, and will ^{certainly} ^{fully} requite us all the evil which we did unto him.

16. And they sent a ^{messenger} ^{message} unto Jō'seph, saying, Thy father did command before he died, saying,

17. So shall ye say unto Jō'seph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the ^{trespass} ^{transgression} of thy brethren, and their sin; ³for ^{that} they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive them, ^{trespass} ^{transgression} of the servants of ⁴the God of thy father. And Jō'seph wept when they spake unto him.

¹ Acts 7: 14.

² Job 15: 21.

³ Prov. 28: 13.

⁴ Gen. 49: 25.



From a Photograph by Wilson.

Joseph's Tomb. Shechem.

he bade his brothers insist upon the evidence of their own eyes, and especially upon the testimony of Benjamin, whom their father would more readily believe, since he had not deceived Jacob as had his other sons. **My mouth that speaketh unto you.** At the former interviews Joseph spoke to his brothers through an interpreter, now he addressed them in their own language.

13. **Ye shall tell my father of all my glory.** This was not said in pride. The recital was (1) to make Jacob sure that Joseph's promises could be carried out; (2) to comfort Jacob with the knowledge of the good fortune that had come to his long-lost son; and (3) to make it easier for the ten sons to confess to their father the crime and deceit of the past. Their sin would be little noticed in the radiance of the good that God's providence had brought out of it, as a black coal in the sunlight does not seem black, but radiates the glowing rays of the sun.

Twelfth Step: the Reunited Brothers.—Vs. 14, 15; Gen. 50: 15-21. "A moment more saw him and Benjamin locked in each other's arms, their tears freely flowing. And he kissed *all* his brethren. Simeon? Yes. Reuben? Yes. Those who had tied his hands and mocked his cries? Yes. He kissed them *all*. And after that they talked with him."—*F. B. Meyer*. This is the end of the tragedy of envy, hatred, and cruelty. Repentance and forgiveness have done their perfect work.

The remaining chapters of Genesis tell how Jacob and his clan came down to Egypt, entering upon a new era in the history of the Hebrew race. They relate the beautiful story of how Joseph, not ashamed of his old father, gladly presented him and his brothers to Pharaoh. They picture Jacob's death, and the fear of the brothers that Joseph might no longer be restrained from taking revenge upon them. The last scene in the grand old book is Joseph's assurance, with tears, that his forgiveness and reconciliation are permanent. "So Joseph died, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt."

JOSEPH: A SUMMARY. The chief characteristics of this remarkable man were: (1) filial devotion; (2) absolute purity and honesty; (3) unselfishness, and readiness to help others;

18. And his brethren also went and ¹ fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we ^{be} thy servants.

19. And Jō'seph said unto them, ² Fear not: ³ for ^{am} I in the place of God?

20. ⁴ But ^{And} as for you, ye ^{thought} ^{meant} evil against me; ^{but} ⁵ God meant it ^{unto} ^{for} good, to bring to pass, as ^{it} ^{is} this day, to save much people alive.

21. Now therefore fear ye not: ⁶ I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake ^a kindly unto them.

¹ Gen. 37: 7, 10.

² Gen. 45: 5.

³ Deut. 32: 35; Job 34: 29;
Rom. 12: 19.

⁴ Psa. 56: 5; Isa. 10: 7.

⁵ Gen. 45: 5, 7; Acts 3: 13

⁶ Gen. 47: 12; Matt. 5: 44.
a Hebrew, *to their hearts*.

(4) humility; (5) a cheerful faith in God and in his destiny; (6) faithfulness in little things; (7) resolution and enterprise; (8) patience and perseverance. These qualities are within the reach of any man, and they will make any man's life successful.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

"These dealings of Joseph with his brethren are the very pattern of God's dealings with men." — *Trench*. "There is forgiveness in his heart the moment we stand before him. But ofttimes he leads the penitent through experience after experience, before he reveals himself in full, rich love." — *J. R. Miller*.

"We may think that God is needlessly exacting when he requires evidence not only of a changed mind about past sin, but also of such a mind being now in us as will preserve us from future sin, but no man whose common worldly interests were at stake would commit himself to us on any less evidence." — *Expositor's Bible*.

And so, just as in the case of Joseph's brothers, God often brings men under the pressure of material need in order to show them their spiritual need. He forces upon them constant reminders of their sin, to keep their consciences sensitive. Sometimes he shuts them in where they must think, as in the night, in loneliness, in sickness. Sometimes he arouses them by the danger and loss of their loved ones. And always, when we do turn from sin, our Elder Brother is ready with outstretched arms, and he will receive us, and comfort us, and set us in the way of a noble life again. And he says to us: —

"Behold in me your Brother,
The Brother whom you sold!
Yet fear not, for I love you
With love that grows not cold.
Through death and resurrection I have passed,
And now I claim you for my own at last."
— *Catharine Hankey*.

LESSON VII. — May 19.

ISRAEL ENSLAVED IN EGYPT. — Exodus 1: 1-14.

COMMIT vs. 13, 14. READ the chapter.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.* — *PSA. 107: 13.*

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. Read the first chapter of Exodus.
2. Compare the lists of Jacob's sons in Gen. 35: 23-26; 46: 8-26.
3. Read the description of these sons in Genesis 49.

4. As to the numbers to which the Israelites grew, see Num. 1: 46.
5. For the length of the captivity, see Gen. 15: 13, 14; Ex. 12: 40; 1 Kings 6: 1; Gal. 3: 17.

6. Compare the accounts of the oppression in Deut. 26: 5-8; Acts 7: 17-19.

7. Read the references in Psalm 105, and find some of the many other references in the Psalms to the captivity.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 13, 14; Zech. 13: 9; Psa. 34: 19.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Primary Department.—The sand table will add much vividness to the lesson. Build up the region between the Nile, the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean, showing the Great Wall. Construct a store house of sand, imitate the subterranean works, and show how the water was raised to higher levels by tread wheels.

Intermediate Department.—Ask each scholar to bring to the class some illustration of the horrors of slavery, taken from history or from present times in Africa. Let each bring also some written statement of the good that came to Israel from the bondage.

Senior Department.—Five members of the class may prepare research papers: (1) The duration of the stay in Egypt. (2) The question of the increase of the people. (3) The question of the king at the time of the oppression. (4) Some account of Egyptian slavery and slavery in other lands. (5) Archaeological discoveries connected with our lesson.

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

An outline of the Book of Exodus.

References to the bondage in other parts of the Bible.

The evils of slavery.

Reasons for the long sojourn in Egypt.

Sin as a slavery.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Place.—Egypt, especially the land of Goshen.

Time.—Jacob went down to Egypt about B. C. 1700 (Ussher, B. C. 1706). The sojourn in Egypt lasted for 215 or 430 years from that time. See the discussion below.

Rulers.—The Pharaoh of the oppression was quite certainly Rameses II. The Pharaoh of the exodus was his son Menephtah I.

Light from the Monuments.—The cuneiform correspondence on clay tablets found at Tell el Amarna in Egypt throws light on the relation between Egypt and Palestine. The splendid discovery of Pithom is described below. The mummy of Rameses II. was discovered in 1881 at Thebes.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: What the Israelites Gained from Affliction.

I. THE BOOK OF EXODUS.

The name. Author and date.
Divisions. Character of the book.
Relation to other books of the Bible.

II. THE CHOSEN FAMILY (vs. 1-5).

The twelve sons of Jacob.
The seventy, and perhaps three thousand.
The reasons for removal from Canaan.

III. A PERIOD OF PROSPERITY (vs. 6, 7).

Why prosperity came before adversity.
The increase of the Israelites.
The length of the stay in Egypt.

IV. A PERIOD OF ADVERSITY (vs. 8-14).

The new king and who he was.
The double fear regarding the Israelites.
The oppression under taskmasters.
Rameses II. as a builder.

V. THE CLIMAX OF CRUELTY (Ex. 1: 15-22).

The attempted destruction of the boy babies.
What the Israelites gained from their afflictions.
What we may gain from ours.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Exodus, by Ellicott, Macgregor, Alford, Cook, Exell, Chadwick, Parker, Rawlinson, etc. Price's *The Monuments and the Old Testament*. Petrie's *Syria and Egypt from the Tell el Amarna Letters*. Kellogg's *Abraham, Joseph, and Moses in Egypt*. Rawlinson's *Ancient Egypt and Egypt and Babylon*. McCurdy's *History, Prophecy, and the Monuments*, Vol. I., Book III. Hilprecht's *Recent Research in Bible Lands*. Sayce's *Higher Criticism and the Monuments*. Humphrey's *Sacred History*. Robinson's *The Pharaoh of the Bondage*. Dawson's *Egypt and Syria*. Naville's *The Store City of Pithom*. Works on Egypt mentioned in the last lesson.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Wordsworth's sonnet, "There is a bondage worse, far worse to bear." Henry Kirke White's "Ode to Liberty." Hartley Coleridge's sonnet, "Liberty." S. T. Coleridge's "Work without Hope." Adelaide Procter's "A Chant." Bryant's "The Antiquity of Freedom." Ingraham's *The Pillar of Fire*. Letter VI. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, XII., 155-172.

HYMNS OF THE AGES.

Cowper's "Tis my happiness below Not to live without the cross." Cowper's "God moves in a mysterious way."

1. Now ¹ these ^{are} the names of the ^{children} ^{are} sons of Is'ra-el, which came into E'gypt; every man and his household came with Jā'cob.
2. Reu'ben, Šim'e-on, Lē'vi, and Jū'dah;
3. Is'sa-char, Zēb'u-lun, and Bēn'ja-min;
4. Dān and Nāph'ta-li, Gād and Ash'er.
5. And all the souls that came out of the ^a loins of Jā'cob were ² seventy souls: ^{for} ^{and} Jō'seph was in E'gypt ^{already}.

¹ Gen. 46: 8; Ex. 6: 14.² V. 20; Gen. 46: 26; Deut. 10: 22.^a Hebrew, *thigh*.

I. The Book of Exodus. — *The name.* "The second book of the Pentateuch is, in the Hebrew Bible, simply entitled (from its opening words) 'Now these are the names of,' or briefly, 'The names of.' The later Jews called it the book of 'Damages,' from the legislative element which here comes prominently into view." — *Professor Robertson*. "It received from the Jews of Alexandria, who first translated the Pentateuch into Greek about 250 B. C., the appropriate title of 'The Departure' (in Greek *Exodos*, hence the Latin *Exodus*), from the epoch-making event recorded in the first part of the book." — *Temple Bible*.

Author and date. See the discussion of the book of Genesis in the introduction to the first quarter.

Relation to other books of the Bible. Exodus continues the history of Genesis, and the events it relates are constantly referred to in the later books and are necessary for the understanding of them.

Divisions. Two great subjects are treated. The portion we study this quarter, chaps. 1-15: 21, is called by Dr. Kennedy "The Epic of the Great Deliverance," and the remainder of the book, "The Solemn Institution of the Theocracy at Sinai."

Character of the book. "There is in it the protoplasm of the whole action of God in the complete sphere of human history." — *Joseph Parker*. "In this book we stand with bowed head and uplifted heart at the ultimate fountainhead of Christianity. . . . The book of Exodus supplies the key to Israel's place in history." — *Temple Bible*.

II. The Chosen Family. — Vs. 1-5. "The first seven verses are introductory to the whole book. In accordance with the almost invariable custom of the writer, there is first a brief recapitulation of preceding events, and then a statement of the actual condition of affairs." — *Joseph Parker*.

1. These are the names. The twelve sons of Jacob only are given, the heads of the families or clans. **Every man and his household.** "The 'household,' according to the Hebrew idea, included not merely wife and children, but men-servants and maid-servants, dependents and retainers, even hirelings who might quit the service and go elsewhere when it pleased them." — *Rawlinson*. How numerous these households were can be surmised from the fact that Abraham could muster 318 armed men to rescue Lot (Gen. 14: 14); Isaac was mightier than some of the neighboring kings (Gen. 26: 16); Esau and Jacob had to separate because their followers were so numerous (Gen. 36: 6, 7).

2. Reuben, Simeon, etc. Note that the sons of Leah are placed first, then Benjamin, the son of Rachel, then the four sons of the handmaids. Joseph, the second son of Rachel, is named by himself because he was already in Egypt.

5. And all . . . were seventy souls. The list is given in Genesis 46, where two women are included, Dinah, Jacob's daughter, and Serah, a granddaughter. Perhaps, as Canon Cook suggests, these were named because they remained unmarried. Dean Payne Smith (Bampton Lectures) estimates that altogether, with their households and retainers, they numbered three thousand souls. "That so large a body should be favorably received need not excite surprise. Egypt was always open to refugees from foreign lands, and the circumstances of the time were such as secured this particular body of immigrants a warm welcome." — *Rawlinson*. These circumstances were the popularity and power of their kinsman, Joseph, and the fact that the throne was occupied by one of the Shepherd kings, coming from the same region as the Hebrews, not unsympathetic with them in religion, and ready to count the accession of all aliens a help in maintaining the subjugation of the restive Egyptians.

THE REASONS FOR REMOVAL. "There was need for Jacob's family being removed from Canaan, as some of them were becoming much tainted with the idolatry and pollution prevalent there. In Egypt, on the whole, life was purer. Then there was a risk of their

6. And ¹ Jō'seph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation.

7. ² And the children of Is'ra-el were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.

¹ Gen. 50: 26; Acts 7: 15.

² Gen. 46: 3; Acts 7: 17.

amalgamating by marriage with the doomed Canaanites; but the Egyptians were so different a race that there was no such risk with them. To be among the Egyptians would also be a benefit to them in other ways, for they would learn much from a people so skilled in all the arts of life and so superior in civilization." — *Blakie*. Even the afflictions they were to suffer there were not the least of their gains from the stay in Egypt, as we shall see.

III. A Period of Prosperity. — Vs. 6, 7. It was a wise providence of God that introduced the period of bondage in Egypt with a period of liberty and prosperity; otherwise, the Hebrews would not have remained in Egypt after the end of the famine.

6. And Joseph died. B. C. 1635 (Ussher), aged 110 years. For seventeen years he lived at home, in Mesopotamia and Hebron; ten years he was a slave in Egypt, three years in prison, and eighty years he was ruler in Egypt. He had two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, the ancestors of two great tribes; and he lived to see his great-grandchildren (Gen. 50: 23). His body was embalmed, and kept in Egypt till the Israelites went out a great nation, when it was taken to the land of Canaan, and buried in Shechem, near Mts. Ebal and Gerizim (Ex. 13: 19). **And all that generation.** Both Israelites and Egyptians. Joseph's fame and influence, however, doubtless continued for some time after his death.

7. And the children of Israel were fruitful (in children). A metaphor "from the vegetable world, in which the increase varies from a small multiple to several hundreds-fold." — *Murphy*. **And increased abundantly.** Literally, *spawned, swarmed*, a metaphor "borrowed from the finny tribes, in which the rate of increase rises to many myriads." — *Murphy*. **And multiplied.** This is the third of five expressions in this verse which are joined together to give a powerful emphasis to the fact that there was a remarkable increase of the Israelites beyond all precedent or ordinary calculation. **And waxed exceeding mighty.** Strong in numbers, and strong individually from their healthy outdoor life, they would be a powerful body if united. **And the land was filled with them.** "As they grew in numbers Goshen became too small for them, and they were compelled to take up their abode in the great towns, or to emigrate into the neighboring districts, where they had to work as common laborers on the land of others, or else to occupy themselves in handicrafts." — *Rawlinson*.

THE INCREASE OF THE ISRAELITES. In Num. 1: 46 it is said that the Israelites when they left Egypt numbered 603,550 men, which implies a total population, counting the women and children, of at least two millions. In accounting for this growth, especially if we accept the shorter estimate of the stay in Egypt (see below), we must take into account several facts: —

1. The ancestors of the two millions were not only Jacob's sons, but also all the members of their clans.

2. "The Israelites lived in the most productive portion of the most productive of all lands. According to Aristotle, the women in Egypt not only often bore twins, but also, far more frequently than elsewhere, three, four, and sometimes five children at a birth." — *Rosenmüller*.

3. Population has been known to double itself in fifteen and even thirteen years, where there is a large influx of immigrants. Malthus declared that the natural increase of populations by descent under favorable circumstances is a doubling every twenty-five years. At this rate 3,000 persons would become more than three million in two and a half centuries. Many checks, however, would keep down the increase of population, such as the crowding of the land of Goshen, the heavy tasks of slaves, and the poor food doubtless given them during the years of servitude.

4. "The numbers may have been augmented by the adhesion of proselytes like Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Heber the Kenite (Judg. 1: 16; 4: 11)." — *Bishop Hervey*.

5. The character of the Israelites is to be considered. They did not practise the vices that lower the vitality of races.

6. In any event, we are to recognize here the hand of God, blessing his people, and fulfilling the promise of great numbers that he made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

8. Now there ¹arose ^{up} a new king over E'gypt, which knew not Jō'seph.

¹ Acts 7: 18.

THE LENGTH OF THE STAY IN EGYPT.

1. In Gen. 15: 13, 14 God tells Abraham that his people will be afflicted in some nation for four hundred years. In Ex. 12: 40 it is definitely said that "the sojourning of the children of Israel, which they sojourned in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years" (R. v.). That would seem to be clear, but Paul, in Gal. 3: 17, gives 430 years as the time between the call of Abraham and the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, less than a year after the exodus. Between the call of Abraham and Jacob's going to Egypt 215 years elapsed, leaving, according to the chronology followed by Paul, 215 years also for the stay in Egypt. The Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch confirm this shorter period, adding to Ex. 12: 40 the words, "which they sojourned in the land of Canaan and in Egypt." There is good reason, however, for thinking that the Septuagint and the Samaritan Pentateuch have been tampered with in those places.

2. In 1 Kings 6: 1 the time from the exodus to the building of the temple is set down as 480 years. A comparison with Assyrian chronology fixes the date of the founding of the temple as B. C. 973. That would make the date of the exodus B. C. 1353. However, some scholars hold "the number 480 to be conjectural, arising from the supposition that from the exodus to the founding of the temple there were twelve generations of forty years each. The interval from the exodus to the founding of the temple is probably nearer 300 than 500 years." — *Hastings's Bible Dictionary*. A comparison with Egyptian chronology does not help us, though it is quite certain that the Pharaoh of the oppression was Rameses II. of the 19th dynasty, because the dates of Egyptian dynasties are so very uncertain.

3. Though the question, as between 215 and 430 years, must remain unsettled, awaiting further light, yet, as is shown above, even the shorter period affords scope for the growth of the nation from the party that emigrated to Egypt; and that is the main point, after all.

IV. A Period of Adversity. — Vs. 8-14. The period of prosperity through which the Israelites passed was from Jehovah; but so, no less certainly, was the period of adversity which followed as soon as they were strong enough to endure it. Both were parts of God's great process of development and training.

8. Now. Conjunction, not adverb of time. **There arose up a new king.** A new dynasty of kings. The Shepherd or Hyksos kings, that were on the throne during Joseph's time, were conquered by the princes of Thebes, who founded the 18th dynasty. There followed "the most brilliant epoch in the annals of Egypt, and the creation of an Egyptian empire." — *Sayce*. These kings, however, came more and more under Asiatic influence. "The court had become Asiatic, the country was governed by foreigners or by Egyptians who had adopted a foreign creed, the old capital had been forsaken by the Pharaoh, and a crusade had been carried on against the national faith." — *Sayce*. A tremendous national uprising against this Semitic control resulted in the founding of the 19th dynasty by Rameses (Ramses) I., whose grandson, Rameses II., was quite certainly the Pharaoh of the oppres-



From Breasted's "History of Egypt," C. Scribner's Sons.

Limestone Stela Cut into the Face of the Rocks Overlooking the Dog River near Barût. Ramses II. on the Right, Esarhaddon on the Left.

9. And he said unto his people, Behold, ¹the people of the children of Is'ra-el ^{are} more and mightier than we:

10. ²Come on, let us ³deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they ^{also} join ^{also} themselves unto our enemies, and fight against us, and ^{so} get them up out of the land.

11. Therefore they did set over them taskmasters ⁴to afflict them with their ⁵burdens. And they built for Pharaoh ⁶treasure store cities, Pithom ⁷and Raamses.

¹ Psa. 105: 24.

² Psa. 83: 3; 4.

³ Psa. 105: 25; Acts 7: 19.

⁴ Ex. 3: 7; Gen. 15: 13; Deut. 26: 6.

⁵ Ex. 2: 11; 5: 4, 5; 6: 6, 7; 1'sa.

81: 6.

⁶ Comp. 2 Chron. 16: 4.

⁷ Comp. Ex. 12: 37; Gen. 47: 11.



Breasted's "History of Egypt," C. Scribner's Sons.

Black Granite Statue of Ramses II.

IN THE TURIN MUSEUM.

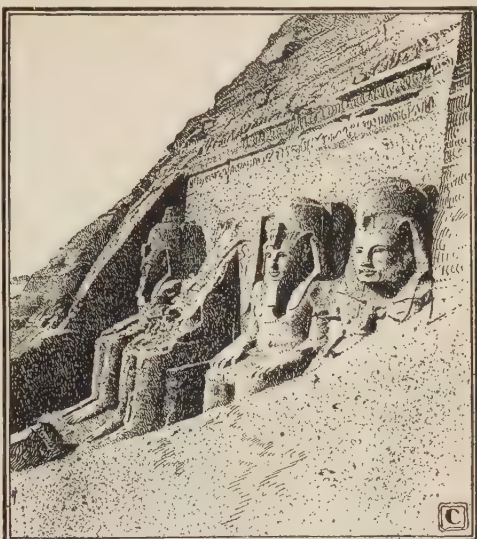
sion. Which knew not Joseph. Coming into power the way they did, these kings of the 19th dynasty would have no sympathy with a Hebrew, and would wish to forget that the nation had ever been laid under obligations by one of the hated race.

9. The children of Israel are more and mightier than we. "The more to impress his counsellors, and gain their consent to his designs, the king exaggerates." — *Ellicott*. Egypt had at that time a population of seven or eight millions, while the Hebrews, perhaps a century later, numbered only two millions.

10. The king's fear was twofold. (1) There was danger lest they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us. These enemies were the wild tribes of Arabia, the armies of Assyria, which approached Egypt sometimes, and especially the great power of Syria, the Hittites, who had been growing powerful during the 18th dynasty. Both Rameses I. and his son Seti had waged war with the Hittites. All these enemies were on the east, and must enter Egypt from that side where the Israelites lived. (2) There was danger lest they get them up out of the land. Thus their supply of laborers would be diminished, and large revenues lost, and their eastern borders would be left less guarded. Already we see that unwillingness to let the Israelites go which became so marked during the efforts of Moses.

11. Therefore they did set over them taskmasters. This was the first measure taken against the Israelites. "Literally, 'lords of tribute,' or 'lords of service.' The term used, *sarey massim*, is the Egyptian official title for overlookers of forced labor. It occurs in this sense on the monument representing brick-making, which has been supposed by some to be a picture of the Hebrews at work." — *Pulpit Commentary*. "The Israelites were employed in forced labors, probably in detachments, each under an Egyptian taskmaster, but they were not reduced to slavery, properly speaking, nor treated as captives of war; they continued to occupy and cultivate their own district, and they retained possession of their houses, flocks, herds, and other property until they emigrated from Egypt." — *Speaker's Commentary*. The people were compelled as in Solomon's time to work a certain

number of months without pay upon the public works. Then another set were forced to take their places. Canon Tristram reveals its cruelty to us when he says: "In Egypt this cruel system ground down the peasantry to the lowest state of degradation, compelled by the *kurbash*, a weapon worse than the whips of Solomon, until recently abolished there by the English occupation. I have myself seen the whole male population of several villages driven together, at the bayonet's point, to toil at some irrigation works for weeks together, receiving only the barest rations; and their families left to starve or live as they could meanwhile, with no provision whatever." "The system of *corvée*, or forced labor, has been at the root of the misery of Oriental nations, and of many others also. It led to the downfall of the Tarquins at Rome. It existed in France to the epoch of the Revolution, of which it was one of the principal causes; for naturally its weight fell most heavily upon the poor. It still flourishes in Persia, and in a modified form throughout the Turkish Empire, where, however, it is only enforced for works of public and local utility." To afflict them with their burdens. The proposed effect of this oppression was (1) to destroy their physical strength; (2) to break their spirit and courage; (3) to check their increase by destroying thrift, thus leading to disease — (it did produce leprosy — *Stduley*); and (4) perhaps to make them so wretched that they would destroy their children to save them from so hard a life. **And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, R. v., "store cities."** These were depots "near the eastern frontier, in which provisions might be gathered for the troops that were to be despatched to Palestine." — *Prof. L. B. Paton*. **Pithom and Raamses.** Both places were in Goshen. Raamses (another form of Rameses or Ramses) has not yet been discovered. "The city is mentioned in the Egyptian texts. We learn from them that it was built, like Pithom, by Ramses II., from whom it derived its name; and a letter of the scribe Panbesa, translated by Brugsch, gives a long and glowing description of it. Its canals are said to be 'rich in fish, its lakes swarm with birds, its meadows are green with vegetables.' 'The land of Rameses' seems to have taken its name from the city." — *Hastings's Bible Dictionary*. Pithom, however, was discovered in 1883-84 by M. Naville near the Suez Canal, about twelve miles west of Ismailia (Ismā'īlā). "The town is altogether a square, enclosed by a brick wall 22 feet thick, and measuring 650 feet along each side. The area contained within the wall is estimated at about ten acres. Nearly the whole of this space is occupied by solidly built square chambers, divided one from the other by brick walls from eight to ten feet thick, which are unpierced by window or door, or opening of any kind." — *Rawlinson*. The access to these chambers was from the top. Granite statues were found representing Rameses II. Among the inscriptions occurred the name of the city, Pi-Tum (Pithom) meaning "the house of Tum," the Egyptian god of the setting sun. An unfinished temple of Tum was also found. Specimens of the bricks can be found in the British Museum, and in the Metropolitan Museum of New York. They are usually from 4 to 8 inches square and 1½ to 2 inches thick, unbaked, but very hard. An especial confirmation of the Bible story, and proof that this is one of the very cities that the Hebrews built, is the fact that "the lower courses of these walls, and for some distance up, are of well-made bricks with chopped straw in them; but higher up the courses of brick are not so good, the straw is long and scanty, and the last courses have no straw at all, but have sedges, rushes, and water plants in the mud." — *Harper*. See Ex. 5: 6-18.



From a Photograph by Wilson.

Four Colossi from the North Side of the Great Temple of
Abu-Simbel. Built by Rameses II.

throughout the Turkish Empire, where, however, it is only enforced for works of public and local utility." To afflict them with their burdens. The proposed effect of this oppression was (1) to destroy their physical strength; (2) to break their spirit and courage; (3) to check their increase by destroying thrift, thus leading to disease — (it did produce leprosy — *Stduley*); and (4) perhaps to make them so wretched that they would destroy their children to save them from so hard a life. **And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, R. v., "store cities."** These were depots "near the eastern frontier, in which provisions might be gathered for the troops that were to be despatched to Palestine." — *Prof. L. B. Paton*. **Pithom and Raamses.** Both places were in Goshen. Raamses (another form of Rameses or Ramses) has not yet been discovered. "The city is mentioned in the Egyptian texts. We learn from them that it was built, like Pithom, by Ramses II., from whom it derived its name; and a letter of the scribe Panbesa, translated by Brugsch, gives a long and glowing description of it. Its canals are said to be 'rich in fish, its lakes swarm with birds, its meadows are green with vegetables.' 'The land of Rameses' seems to have taken its name from the city." — *Hastings's Bible Dictionary*. Pithom, however, was discovered in 1883-84 by M. Naville near the Suez Canal, about twelve miles west of Ismailia (Ismā'īlā). "The town is altogether a square, enclosed by a brick wall 22 feet thick, and measuring 650 feet along each side. The area contained within the wall is estimated at about ten acres. Nearly the whole of this space is occupied by solidly built square chambers, divided one from the other by brick walls from eight to ten feet thick, which are unpierced by window or door, or opening of any kind." — *Rawlinson*. The access to these chambers was from the top. Granite statues were found representing Rameses II. Among the inscriptions occurred the name of the city, Pi-Tum (Pithom) meaning "the house of Tum," the Egyptian god of the setting sun. An unfinished temple of Tum was also found. Specimens of the bricks can be found in the British Museum, and in the Metropolitan Museum of New York. They are usually from 4 to 8 inches square and 1½ to 2 inches thick, unbaked, but very hard. An especial confirmation of the Bible story, and proof that this is one of the very cities that the Hebrews built, is the fact that "the lower courses of these walls, and for some distance up, are of well-made bricks with chopped straw in them; but higher up the courses of brick are not so good, the straw is long and scanty, and the last courses have no straw at all, but have sedges, rushes, and water plants in the mud." — *Harper*. See Ex. 5: 6-18.

12. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and ^{grew.} And ^{the more they spread abroad.} ¹they were grieved because of the children of Israel.

13. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to ³serve with rigour:

14. And ^{and} they ²made their lives bitter with hard ^{bondage, service, in mortar, and in} brick, and in all manner of service in the field; all their service, wherein they made them serve: ^{was} with rigour.

¹ Num. 22 : 3 (mg. for mg.).

² See Ex. 5 : 7-19.

³ Comp. Ex. 2 : 23 ; 6 : 9 ; Num. 20 : 15 ; Acts 7 : 19, 34.

RAMESSES II. AS A BUILDER. "This king was the most enterprising builder of all the Pharaohs, and that means the sacrifice of tens of thousands of lives. He built temples and reared monoliths and colossal statues. His temples were approached through long avenues of sphinxes. Out of the solid rock at Ipsambul he hewed two spacious subterranean temples, and set up at their doors four human figures sixty feet high. Among his public works was a chain of fortifications along the entire northeastern frontier of Egypt, for 160 miles. By his command immense dikes were built on the Lower Nile and in the Delta. Canals were dug, and cities were built." — *Prof. E. P. Humphrey*. He built or repaired the Great Wall which extended along the eastern frontier of Egypt, from the Mediterranean to the Red Sea east of the present Suez Canal and nearly parallel to it. Upon these the Hebrews may have been employed; not, however, upon the pyramids, which were probably constructed before the days of Abraham.

12. But God's design that the Israelites should become a great nation was not thus to be baffled. **The more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied.** "In this they ought to have discerned a divine support, and remembered the promise to Abraham that God would multiply his seed as the stars of heaven." — *Expositor's Bible*. Thus "times of affliction have often been the church's growing times," — *Matthew Henry*. **They were grieved because of the children of Israel.** The Hebrew word translated *grieved* implies "a loathing and disgust, distress and alarm." — *Alford*.

13. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour.



From a Photograph by Wilson.

Pictures on the Walls of the Great Temple at Abu-Simbel.

Showing Rameses II. fighting from his chariot, in personal combat, and passing sentence on captives.

"The word translated *rigour* is a very rare one. It is derived from a root which means to *break in pieces, to crush*." — *Rawlinson*. "The rod of the taskmaster was freely applied to their legs or backs, if they rested their weary limbs for a moment. The heat of the sun was great; the burdens which the laborers had to carry were heavy, and the toil was incessant. Death often resulted from the incessant work. According to Herodotus, a single monarch, Necho, destroyed in this way 120,000 of his subjects." — *Ellicott*. "In the century of Rameses II. thirty thousand laborers died in constructing the Mahmoudieh Canal with their hands, without picks or spades or wheel-bar-

rows." — *Humphrey*. "In the monuments of the reign of Rameses there is not a stone, so to speak, which has not cost a human life." — *Lenormant*.

14. **Service in the field.** "Drawing up the buckets of water from the level of the river for the irrigation of the fields above." — *Stanley*. This was "done by use of the tread-wheel, — a drudgery which gradually paralyzed the most strenuous muscle, and filled the springs of life with malarial poison." — *Humphrey*.

V. **The Climax of Cruelty.** — Ex. i: 15-22. When Pharaoh found the Israelites flourishing even under this terrible oppression, he resorted to measures still more severe, ordering the destruction of their male infants as soon as they were born. The females would be harmless, and would prove valuable slaves. "A similar policy was pursued by the Lacedemonians toward the helots, by Mithridates toward his Roman subjects, and by the Caliph, Hakem, toward the Egyptians." — *F. Johnson*. When the official midwives evaded the king's command, "by a refinement of cruelty to which the Herod of the future was not equal, he required parents to execute the sentence of death on their own children." — *Humphrey*. This was indeed the climax of affliction.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

WHAT ISRAEL GAINED FROM BONDAGE. 1. The oppression kept the Hebrews separate from the Egyptians, preventing intermarriages, and preserving them from debasing contact with idolatry.

2. Their oppression united them into one nation, binding them together in common sorrows, dangers, hopes, and plans.

3. It tended to wean them from the desire for idols, those gods of their enemies, and lead them to the one God who alone could help them in their sore need.

4. In working for the Egyptians they were compelled to use Egyptian arts and appliances, to study the great national works and the noble architecture on which they were employed, and to become acquainted with weaving, the working of metals, the homes, and the literature which was written upon bricks. Professor Price says it "was an industrial training school in the foremost civilization of that day."

5. The oppression weaned them from Egypt, so that they were ready to leave when the time came which God had appointed. Otherwise they might have become so pleasantly settled in business, so encumbered with property, that, as many ages later in Babylon, they would not be willing to enter upon the hard and dangerous enterprise of journeying to Canaan.

WHAT WE MAY GAIN FROM AFFLICTION. "Prosperity is a great teacher," said Hazlitt; "adversity is a greater." Affliction was called by Mallet "the wholesome soil of virtue," in which patience, fortitude, and all the graces take root and flourish.

1. Affliction gives us sympathy for others in distress. "In the wounds our sufferings plough immortal Love sows sovereign seed." — *Massey*.

2. Affliction strengthens our moral fibre and sweetens our character.

ILLUSTRATION. "Men think God is destroying them because he is tuning them. The violinist screws up the key till the tense cord sounds the concert pitch; but it is not to break it, but to use it tunelessly, that he stretches the string upon the musical rack." — *Beecher*.

3. Affliction discloses the best that is in us.

ILLUSTRATION. Professor Hitchcock, the geologist, compared it to such minerals as the hydrophane, a variety of opal, which do not become transparent till they are immersed in water. "So it is with many a Christian. Till the floods of adversity have been poured over him, his character appears marred and clouded by selfishness and worldly influences. But trials clear away the obscurity, and give distinctness and beauty to his piety."

4. Trials show us our weaknesses. They are like the preliminary tests of great guns, which show whether they are ready for the battle.

5. Affliction weans us from this earth, and leads us to look forward with longing to heaven, our real home.

6. Affliction shows us our needs, and thrusts us upon God, our only help in trouble. It is like the rough geode that was found in the west, — an ugly sphere of stone; but when it was split open, lo! there glittered within it a wonderful cross made up of perfect crystals.

ILLUSTRATION. "The floods washed away all the poor man had. But after the water had subsided he saw something shining in the bank which the waters had laid bare. It was gold. The flood which had beggared him had made him rich." — *Henry Clay Trumbull*.

LESSON VIII. — May 26.

CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION OF MOSES.

Exodus 2: 1-15.

COMMIT vs. 9, 10. READ the chapter.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.* — ACTS 7: 22.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. Read Exodus 2 in connection with the New Testament parallels, Acts 7: 19-29; Heb. 11: 23-26.

2. Read "the Prayer of Moses," Psalm 90.

3. Learn the names of Moses' parents from Ex. 6: 18, 20; Num. 26: 59.

4. On the ark of bulrushes compare Isa. 18: 2.

5. Form an idea of the character of Miriam from Ex. 15: 20, 21; Num. 12: 1-15; 20: 1.

6. Compare the preservation of the child Moses with that of Joash, 2 Kings 11: 1-3; and of Christ, Matt. 2: 13-20.

7. In connection with the choice of Moses read that of Solomon, 1 Kings 3: 4-14; also the temptation of Christ, Matt. 4: 8-10.

8. Note other periods of waiting, like that of Moses, before entering upon the life work: John the Baptist and Christ, each thirty years; Paul's three years, Gal. 1: 17, 18.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Primary Department. — Use the sand table, letting a piece of mirror represent the Nile, and sticking in grass for the flags. Plait a little basket of willow twigs, and lay in it a baby doll. Use colored bits of wood for the other characters.

Intermediate Department. — We are to have sixteen lessons on Moses. Give each scholar a blank book of sixteen pages, and tell him he is to write a "Life of Moses" in sixteen chapters, one chapter to a lesson. The scholars may adorn the covers and illustrate the lessons. Every Sunday several scholars may read their chapters for the day.

Senior Department. — Papers or talks on the modes of education in Egypt, the traditions about Moses, the decision of Moses and what it signified. A debate: Did he make any serious mistakes in carrying out his great decision?

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The character of Jochebed.

The character of Miriam.

How Moses' home life prepared him for his life work.

How "the wisdom of Egypt" helped to fit Moses for his work.

What effect would the court life tend to have upon his character?

Trace the steps of providence in the first forty years of Moses' life.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 9, 10; 2 Sam. 22: 17; Heb. 11: 24-26.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Education of Earth's Greatest Man.

I. THE TEACHERS OF MOSES' BOYHOOD (vs. 1-4).

The preeminence of Moses in history.
The persons of the household.
The character of the household.
The beauty of the child.
The mother's daring plan.

II. LESSONS IN PROVIDENCE (vs. 5-9).

The fortunate discovery.
How much depended upon a little girl.
The working of God's plans.

III. LESSONS IN A HEBREW HOME AND AN EGYPTIAN COURT (v. 10).

What Moses owed to his home and mother.
The court life of Moses.
The school life of Moses.
The military life of Moses.

IV. LESSONS IN PATRIOTISM (vs. 11-15).

The great decision.
The patriot's first attempt.
The patriot's second attempt.
The flight to the land of Midian.

V. LESSONS IN PATIENCE (Ex. 2: 16-25).

Forty years in the desert.
The names of Moses' sons.
The lessons of the silent years.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — Moses was born probably during the reign of Rameses II., which lasted 67 years, Rameses dying at the age of nearly 100. Sayce gives as the limits of his reign B. C. 1348-1281; Driver, 1275-1208; Breasted, 1292-1225. According to the common chronology, Moses was born B. C. 1571, and our lesson, covering the first forty years of his life, would extend to 1531.

Place. — Moses was born at the capital of Egypt, which at that time was either Memphis, nearly where modern Cairo is, or Tanis (Zoan), in the eastern part of the Nile delta.

Chronological Chimes. — The period corresponds to the heroic age in Greece, the time of the Trojan war.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Exodus; works on the chronology and the monuments referred to in the last lesson. Rawlinson's *Moses: His Life and Times*. F. B. Meyer's *Moses, the Servant of God*. William M. Taylor's *Moses, the Law-giver*. Banks's *On the Trail of Moses*. Hamilton's *Moses, the Man of God*. Oosterzee's *Moses*. Thornley Smith's *Moses and His Times*. Gibson's *The Mosaic Age*. Hanna's *Patriarchs of the*

Bible. Chapters in Matheson's *Representative Men of the Bible*; Whyte's *Bible Characters*; Geikie's *Old Testament Characters*; *Men of the Old Testament*; Kingsley's *Gospel of the Pentateuch*; Maurice's *Patriarchs and Law-givers of the Old Testament*; Blaikie's *Heroes of Israel*. On Miriam, *Women of the Bible* (two different books, published by James Robinson, Manchester, England, and Harper and Brothers); Broughton's *Representative Women of the Bible*.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

James Grahame's "The Finding of Moses." Hartley Coleridge's "Moses in the Bulrushes." Victor Hugo's "Moses on the Nile." L. R. Dickinson's "Moses in the Ark." Keble's "Sleeping on the Waters." The story of Nausicaa and her maidens in Homer's *Odyssey*. The choice of Hercules, in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*. Pizarro's choice, in Prescott's *Conquest of Peru*, Vol. I. Ingraham's *The Pillar of Fire*. Eber's *The Sisters and Uarda*.

HYMNS OF THE AGES.

Addison's "When all thy mercies, O my God!"
"Whilst thee I seek, protecting Power!"

1. And there went ¹a man of the house of Levi, and took ^{to wife} a daughter of Levi.

¹ Ex. 6: 20; Num. 26: 59; 1 Chron. 23: 14.

I. The Teachers of Moses' Boyhood. — Vs. 1-4. THE GREATNESS OF MOSES. "We have in the historic Moses a great and powerful genius, an organizing and constructing mind. Moses belongs to the great class of nation-makers; to a class of men who have a place by themselves in the history of politics, and who are among the rarest and highest of the phenomena of our race." — *Gladstone*. He was great as a lawmaker, an organizer, a general, a historian, a poet, an orator, and a saint who walked with God. It is not too much to say that our modern civilization is built upon his work. And his greatness is enhanced enormously when we remember that his only material was a disorganized horde of emancipated slaves, encamped in the desert. Probably the majority of thinkers would rate Moses as the greatest man of earth's history. It will be an inspiring study to learn how this wonderful leader was trained for his life work.

HIS FATHER was Amram (Ex. 6: 18, 20), of the house of Levi, to which, as yet, no special dignity was attached.

HIS MOTHER was Jochebed (meaning *Jehovah is glory*), also of the house of Levi, and the aunt of her husband. "Such marriages were common among the Egyptians, and, not having been as yet forbidden by any positive enactment, seem to have been regarded as lawful by the Hebrews." — *Rawlinson*.

HIS SISTER, Miriam, the first *Mary* of the Bible, was a talented girl, perhaps eight or nine years old when he was born.

HIS BROTHER, Aaron, was at that time three years old, already set apart as the coming priest of the family.

THE HOUSEHOLD was religious, untainted by the Egyptian idolatry into which so many of their countrymen fell. We are told (Heb. 11: 23) that the parents acted from faith. The family life was very simple, as Amram was poor. Moses, like the majority of the world's great men, came from a home of obscurity. Let every child be well trained, for there is no knowing what mighty possibilities are in him.

2. And the woman conceived, and bare a son: and ¹ when she saw him that he ^{was a} ^{goodly} ^{child,} ^{she} ^{hid} ^{him} ^{three} ^{months}.

3. And when she could not longer hide him, she took for him an ark of ² bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and with pitch; and ^{she} ^{put} ^{the} ^{child} ^{therein}; and ^{she} ^{laid} ^{it} ⁱⁿ ^{the} ³ flags by the river's brink.

4. ⁴ And his sister stood afar off, to ^{wit} ^{know} what would be done to him.

5. And the ⁵ daughter of Phā'raoh came down to ^{wash} ^{herself} ^{at} ^{the} ^{river}; and her maidens walked along by the ^{river's} ^{side}; and ^{when} ^{she} ^{saw} ^{the} ^{ark} ^{among} ^{the} ^{flags}, ^{she} ^{and} ^{sent} ^{her} ^{maid} ^{handmaid} ^{to} ^{fetch} ^{it}.

¹ Acts 7: 20; Heb. 11: 23.

² Job 8: 11 (mg. for mg.); Isa. 18: 2 (for mg.).

³ V. 5; Isa. 19: 6.

⁴ Ex. 15: 20; Num. 26: 59.

⁵ Acts 7: 21.

THE ABODE of the family was the capital of Egypt at that time, which "was most probably Memphis, occupying nearly the site on which now stands the great city of Cairo. Its great pride and glory was the temple of Phthah, which stood up like a great cathedral, in the center of the lordly town. The household of Amram dwelt under the shadow of the three Great Pyramids, those 'artificial mountains,' the most impressive monuments that have ever been raised by human hands." — *Rawlinson*. Other authorities think that the capital at the time was Tanis.

THE CHARACTER of those that were to have the training of Moses during his most plastic years is shown us in the story of his infancy.

2. Aaron was doubtless born before the edict was promulgated requiring male children of the Hebrews to be destroyed; but that horrible requirement must have filled with anxiety Jochebed's days before the birth of Moses. Her grief at the probable fate of the baby was intensified when she saw that he was a goodly child. "Fair to God," that is, divinely fair, Stephen called him (Acts 7: 20). Josephus says that when he grew up he was so handsome that men would turn to gaze after him as he passed along the street, and laboring men would forget their tasks in the spell of his rare beauty. **She hid him three months.** "It was no easy task, as we may well believe. It involved unbroken silence, great watchfulness, and agonizing suspense. How could Miriam keep the secret about the little stranger? and by what means was Aaron preserved from letting fall even one unfortunate word about his new brother?" — *W. M. Taylor*.

3. **She took for him an ark.** A small covered box or basket. "A vessel whose name and shape recalled a similar danger, and seemed somehow to promise deliverance." — *Blaikie*. **Of bulrushes.** The papyrus reed, whose triangular stem is three to six feet high, and sometimes as high as fifteen feet. Beneath the outer rind are thin, concentric layers, sometimes as many as twenty, which the Egyptians split off, pressed together, and beat and polished to make their paper. The word "paper" comes from "papyrus." Baskets, shoes, and boats were made of it, and it was considered to be a protection against crocodiles. **And daubed it with slime.** Either the Nile mud, or asphalt, which was imported from the Dead Sea ("the Asphaltic Lake") for use in embalming. Outside of all, to make it water-tight, Jochebed spread a layer of **pitch**, a word which "apparently refers to mineral pitch." — *Hastings*. "It forms a hard, glossy wax, perfectly impervious to water." — *William M. Thomson*. **She laid it in the flags.** The flags were the "*sûph*," a different species of reed, which gave its name (*Yâm Sûph*) 'Sea of Weeds,' to what is by us rendered the Red Sea, from the color of the reeds." — *Macgregor*. **By the river's brink.** The river was of course the Nile, and the basket was laid among the flags to keep it from floating down stream. "The mother laid the ark in the flags. Ay, but before doing so she laid it on the heart of God!" — *Joseph Parker*.

4. **His sister stood afar off.** So as not to betray the object of her solicitude. She was to **wit**, that is, to know, what became of the babe. Either the mother could not endure the agony of watching, or her presence would render the real state of the case too evident.

II. **Lessons in Providence.** — Vs. 5-9. The wonderful way in which Moses was preserved must have had an effect on all his life, causing him to understand that he was under the protection of providence. There is great power in a realization of this in the life of any man.

5. **And the daughter of Pharaoh.** "Josephus calls her Thermuthis; Artapanus

6. And ^{when she had opened it, she} ^{she opened it, and} saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This ^{is one} ^{is one} of the Hē'brews' children.

7. Then said his sister to Phā'raōh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hē'brew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?

8. And Phā'raōh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.

9. And Phā'raōh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give ^{thee} ^{thee} thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.

names her Merrhis; some think it was Nefer-ari, the daughter of the previous Pharaoh, and first the sister and then the wife of Rameses II. In any case, "an Egyptian princess was an important personage, with an establishment of her own, and often possessed of much political influence." — *Expositor's Bible*. **To wash herself at the river.** "Cleanliness was especially regarded among the Egyptians, and bathing in the Nile was considered especially healthful. The princess would, of course, seek a part of the river which was reserved for females. Probably Jochebed knew where she was accustomed to bathe." — *Ellicott*. "At least one monument shows an Egyptian lady of rank doing just what this princess did." — *Maclaren*. **Her maidens.** Her attendants, one among whom would be especially her waiting-woman (R. v., "handmaid"), and the latter was sent to bring the ark.

6. And, behold, the babe wept. More exactly, "And lo! a weeping boy." The child was hungry, or chilled by the water, or frightened. "Show me a real woman who suddenly comes on a little chubby baby crying for its mother, and I think I am prophet enough to tell you what will follow." — *Len. G. Broughton, D. D.* **And she had compassion on him.** "Even a king's daughter is the richer and gladder for this stoop of love." — *Joseph Parker*. **This is one of the Hebrews' children.** She knew it either from the complexion, lighter than that of the Egyptians, or from the features, or she understood that only a Hebrew mother would need to hide her child.

7. Then said his sister. "Then came Miriam's opportunity, and she made the most of it. How innocently she stepped up! just like any little girl strolling along the river-side by chance, and attracted by curiosity to look at the screaming baby and the puzzled princess. 'A nurse,' said this small philosopher — 'a nurse, your Highness! That is what you want. Shall I fetch you one?' No sooner is the permission given than young Presence-of-mind is running home to call her mother. The business is done." — *Henry van Dyke*.

9. Take this child away, and nurse it for me. "The princess must have seen that the nurse was Moses' mother. The plot was plain enough, but she enters into the fun of it." — *Prof. W. F. Adeney*. "Of course, it was necessary to dissemble. A daughter of the reigning sovereign could not openly admit that she was encouraging and assisting one of her father's subjects to disobey her father's commands." — *Rawlinson*. "By thus



From a Photograph by Wilson.

Outer Mummy Case of Queen Nefer-ari,
Wife of Rameses II.

CAIRO MUSEUM.

10. And the child grew, and she brought him unto Phā'raōh's daughter, and he became ¹her son. And she called his name ^aMō'ses; and ^{she}said, Because I drew him out of the water.

¹ Acts 7: 21.

^a That is, drawn out.

taking the child, the mother became, from this time, in some sense, the recognized servant of the princess; for otherwise how would she enjoy more safety with her babe than before?" — *Alford*. And I will give thee thy wages. Double wages, indeed! She had not only the wages which made her safe as the servant of the royal princess, but the infinitely better wages of seeing her son safe, and having the privilege of caring for him and training him. "The highest wages in the world are earned by good mothers. The mother who does an honest day's work, week in and week out, in faithful and faith-filled care of her children, is on a large salary, and she will be rich sooner or later." — *Henry Clay Trumbull*.

THE WORKING OF GOD'S PLANS. See what factors entered into this preservation of the world's greatest man. There was (1) a humble slave family; (2) a little basket of bulrushes; (3) a little girl; (4) a baby's tears; (5) Pharaoh's own daughter; (6) the child's own mother; (7) a royal court. All of these were brought together, at just the right time, in just the right way. "This lesson is one of the best illustrations of a perfect combination of the best cowering of human effort and divine providence." — *Bishop Warren*.

ILLUSTRATIONS. "God's Providence is mine Inheritance," — motto on the outside of an ancient house in Chester, England.

God's providence is like the gulf stream, flowing steadily on beneath the tossing of the surface waves.

"I asked a hermit once in Italy how he could venture to live alone, in a single cottage, on the top of a mountain, a mile from any habitation. He replied that 'Providence was his very next-door neighbor.'" — *Sterne*.

"In the great world there are no accidents:
Enthroned above the ages' ebb and flow,
Unseen, misunderstood,
God rules, who in all seasons and events,
Through fiery evil and o'erwhelming woe,
Forever works the good."

— *Lyman Whitney Allen*.

"My bark is wafted to the strand
By breath divine,
And on the helm there rests a hand
Other than mine." — *Dean Alford*.

III. Lessons in a Hebrew Home and an Egyptian Court. — V. 10. And the child grew. How long Moses remained in his mother's home we cannot tell; "perhaps, till the weaning time, which in the case of a Hebrew child may have been for several years." — *Macgregor*. Others say, "At least seven, and not more than twelve." — *Professor Fagnani*. At any rate, all of Moses' after life shows the impress of those years and that home training.

1. He was trained in an atmosphere of love, virtue, and religion.

2. He was taught the knowledge of the one true God.



Ramses II.

From a photograph of the mummy in Cairo Museum, discovered at Thebes in 1881.

3. He was, doubtless, trained in the religious writings and traditions of his people. His noble ancestors, like Abraham and Noah and Enoch, were held up before him as examples.

4. He was taught to hold as his most precious inheritance the great promises and hopes made known to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and Joseph. They were not always to be slaves. They were to become a great and glorious nation, blessing all the world.

5. He was trained in the best morals then known, obedience to parents, faith toward God, and love toward all.

6. In a slave's family he would be trained to work with his hands, to be self-reliant and ingenious.

7. He was one of a family of children, and received the training in all the social virtues which no only child can have.

And now to this, the best and most fundamental education that Moses received, was added a training "in all the wisdom of the Egyptians" (Acts 7: 22). **She brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter.** The tradition is that she, though married, was childless. She formally adopted him, so that **he became her son.** As often in the Bible, the changed condition was indicated by a change in name.

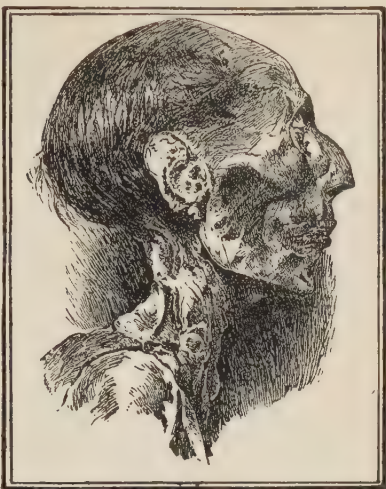
And she called his name Moses. Both an Egyptian and a Hebrew derivation of the name have been proposed, but according to both it means, "brought forth," a pun being intended, as if the princess had said, "This is my son, because I brought him forth — out of the water."

THE COURT LIFE OF MOSES. "The favor of the King's only daughter and presumptive heir made his life in these early years one long, unclouded summer morning, for all that wealth and power could command were at his service." — *Geikie*. "He would live chiefly in the apartments of his mother, which would probably be a portion of the royal residence, and would be furnished with every luxury." — *Rawlinson*. Yet life at Pharaoh's court, "amid all its attractions and advantages, must have had some drawbacks. Egyptian youths and Egyptian courtiers could not be altogether cordial to the Hebrew boy, who, as the grandson of Pharaoh, enjoyed so exalted a position, and received such eminent attention." — *Blaikie*. Josephus even records traditions of attempted assassinations.

THE SCHOOL LIFE OF MOSES. Egypt then had two great universities, at Heliopolis and Hermopolis, and Moses is said to have studied in the former, which was situated about twenty miles north of Memphis. It was "the Oxford of Ancient Egypt," as Alexandria was in later times. Herodotus went thither to gather information for his travels, and Plato studied there for thirteen years. "Shady cloisters opened into lecture rooms for the students, and quiet houses for the professors and priests, in their many grades and offices; there being room for all in the corridors of the huge pile." — *Geikie*. A splendid library would be at his disposal. The library of the Rameseum at Thebes — a structure built by **Rameses II.** — contained 20,000 books.

The studies of the young man would include the two forms of difficult Egyptian writing, arithmetic, geometry, trigonometry to some extent, astronomy, music both vocal and instrumental, painting and architecture, medicine and chemistry, history and law, poetry and other branches of literature, and especially theology, extending to its highest form, "the philosophy of symbolism," in which the Egyptian religion, gross as it was, came nearest to the Hebrew. As a member of the royal family, Moses was no doubt received into the priestly caste, and knew all their secret lore. Much of this "wisdom of the Egyptians" was shallow and absurd; but much of it also was of the highest value to Moses in the great work he accomplished.

THE MILITARY LIFE OF MOSES. Stephen tells us (Acts 7: 22) that Moses was "mighty in words and in deeds." The words "may have meant such power of composition as appears in the hymn by the Red Sea, and in the magnificent valediction to his people." — *Expositor's Bible*. As to the deeds, after completing his university course, Moses might



Profile of Ramses II.

From a photograph of the mummy in Cairo Museum.

11. And it came to pass in those days, ¹when Mō'ses was grown^{up}, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their ²burdens: and he ^{spied} ^{saw} an E-gyp'tian smiting an He'brew, one of his brethren.

12. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that ^{there was} ^{there was} no man, he ³slew ^{smit} the E-gyp'tian, and hid him in the sand.

13. And ⁴when he went out the second day, and, behold, two men of the He'breds strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow?

14. And he said, ⁵Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? ^{intendest} ^{thinkest} thou to kill me, as thou killedst the E-gyp'tian? And Mō'ses feared, and said, Surely ^{this} ^{the} thing is known.

¹ Acts 7: 23, 24; Heb. 11: 24, 25, 26.

² Ex. 1: 11.
³ Acts 7: 24.

⁴ Acts 7: 26.
⁵ Acts 7: 27.

have become a hanger-on at the court, or obtained some civil appointment and sought to climb the official ladder, or entered the literary life, or devoted himself to the priesthood, or become a soldier. The tradition that he chose the last-named calling is in accordance with the probabilities, and explains his great military ability displayed in the exodus and afterwards. "According to Josephus (upon what foundation we do not know), the Ethiopians made an incursion into Egypt, and routed the army which was sent to resist them. Panic spread over the country, and Pharaoh trembled at the approach of the swarthy savages. The oracles, well aware of his remarkable abilities, advised that the command should be intrusted to Moses. He immediately took the field, and by a rapid though roundabout march surprised the enemy, defeated them with heavy slaughter, drove them back into their own territories, and followed them up so hard, capturing one city after another, that they found no asylum till they reached the swamp-girdled city of Meroë."—*Hamilton*. Moses is said to have returned from this campaign the most popular man in the kingdom, having also learned thoroughly the weakness and the strength of the people and of Pharaoh.

IV. Lessons in Patriotism.—Vs. 11-15. 11. When Moses was grown. He was forty years old, Stephen tells us (Acts 7: 23), when this event happened. We are also told, in Heb. 11: 24-27, of a definite choice made at this time between the court and his suffering people. We do not know the immediate cause of this choice. Possibly he was required from his position to take part against the people. Possibly, as Rawlinson thinks, "he quitted the palace, gave up whatever offices he held, and returned to his father's house." At any rate, the decision was made, and "an Exodus and the birth of a nation of freemen were the outcome of this great renunciation."—*F. B. Meyer*.

THE PATRIOT'S FIRST ATTEMPT. 12. It was natural that Moses' first attempt at aiding his people should be a blunder. Even the greatest men make mistakes, and prove their greatness by their ability to learn from their mistakes. Seeing a cruel Egyptian task-master beating a Hebrew, perhaps a feeble old man, in a hot burst of wrath **he slew the Egyptian**. Moses then **hid the body in the sand**. "Thus he hindered embalmment, without which the soul of the dead man would never enter the Egyptian heaven."—*Geikie*. "I for one will exonerate and all but absolve that grave in the sand. The Egyptian slave-driver, as I take it, deserved all that he got."—*Alexander Whyte, D. D.* Doubtless Moses expected the Hebrews to rise and throw off their oppression; but it was not God's time; for (1) the people had not been trained to follow Moses' leadership; (2) Moses himself was not fully prepared to lead; and (3) the escape of the nation from the strong Rameses II. was, humanly speaking, impossible, while it was comparatively easy under his weaker successor.

THE PATRIOT'S SECOND ATTEMPT. 13. "To smite the oppressor was not enough. Moses must unite and discipline the oppressed. And this was his next effort."—*Hanna*. "The treatment he received from the Hebrews he sought to aid, showed that they were by no means ripe for freedom or nationality."—*W. J. Townsend, D. D.* Finding his people quarreling, he sought to show them the folly of it, telling them, as the Americans were told during the Revolution, "We must all hang together, or we shall all hang separately!" Their churlish response showed him that they not only would not follow his leadership, they would not even keep his secret.

14. And Moses feared. Death was the inevitable punishment, and the king was

15. Now when Phā'raōh heard this thing, he sought to slay Mō'ses. But ¹Mō'ses fled from the face of Phā'raōh, and dwelt in the land of Mīd'i-an: and he sat down by ²a well.

¹ Acts 7: 29; Heb. 11: 27.

² Gen. 24: 11.

even then seeking (the word implies cautiousness, for Moses had great influence) to bring it about. Immediate flight was necessary.

15. Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh. Eastward, the only way he could hope to escape. He kept on to **the land of Midian**, in the southeastern part of the Sinaitic peninsula, because "the western parts of it were doubtless still occupied by the Egyptians." — *Wade*. Here the weary fugitive **sat down by a well**, which was used for watering the flocks. Not deterred by his unfortunate experiences in helping others, he chivalrously aided seven young women, shepherdesses, against some rude shepherds, and thus obtained the best possible introduction to their father, who turned out to be the priest and sheik of the Midianite tribe occupying that region. His name was Reuel (Raguel), and he was also called Jethro. Moses became a shepherd of his flocks, and was given Zipporah, one of the young women whom he had so gallantly aided, for his wife.

V. Lessons in Patience. — Ex. 2: 16-25. Moses remained in Midian for the second of the three forty-years periods into which his life is divided. Nothing is told us of those years except the significant names he gave his two sons. The first, Gershom, "a sojourner," tells a pathetic story of Moses' loneliness and impatience. The second, Eliezer, "God my helper," implies a better mood, gratitude for his escape from Pharaoh. Nevertheless, those silent forty years must have taught Moses many a lesson. He was in a country of "grandeur combined with desolation." — *Stanley*. "The mountains are the Alps of Arabia, but the Alps planted in the desert. The silence is complete. No song of birds enlivens the Sinaitic solitudes, no hum of insect life breaks the deathlike stillness." — *Rawlinson*. Having learned all he could in the crowded life of Egypt, here Moses held long and peaceful communion with Jehovah. While the outdoor life was confirming that physical vigor which was so marked a characteristic of his old age, he was becoming thoroughly familiar with the regions where for forty years he was to guide his people, and he had leisure, under God's guidance, to plan every detail of that wonderful system of laws upon which his nation was to be constructed. And during those years in the desert his own character was greatly enriched, his headstrong will was subdued, and he learned that lesson so necessary for all leaders to learn, the lesson of patience.

ILLUSTRATIONS. Just as plants must have their winter rest, so men need times of quiet and meditation, if their minds are to be fruitful. Compare the long periods of preparation and loneliness in the lives of David, Elijah, Paul, John the Baptist, Christ. "There are some photographs which one cannot take well with an instantaneous exposure; they need time exposures." — *President Faunce*.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. "Every man's life is a plan of God." The life of each scholar in your class has been planned by God as carefully and lovingly as that of Moses.

2. The best start in life is that afforded by a godly home. Not the richest family in Egypt gave their son a better outfit for life than Moses received from his slave parents.

3. Every child is a possible prince. Moses would have been a princely man though he had never been adopted by Pharaoh's daughter.

4. The chain of providence is always ready, when hands are ready to seize it. Whoever is willing to move along the line of God's plans, will find his life as full of special providences as that of Moses.

5. Every life is at some time placed at the cross-roads, as was Hercules in the ancient story, and bidden to make choice between worldly pleasure and eternal joys. Hercules chose the latter, with hardships; and so did Moses.

6. Desert experiences come to all, times of waiting, of apparent failure. Rightly used, they are the most precious times. "The silt drops from the current of our lives, as from the Rhone in its passage through the deep waters of Geneva's lake." — *F. B. Meyer*.

"Angel of Patience! sent to calm
Our feverish brows with cooling palm;
To lay the storms of hope and fear,

And reconcile life's smile and tear;
The throbs of wounded pride to still,
And make our own our Father's will!"

— *Whittier*.

LESSON IX. — June 2.

MOSES CALLED TO DELIVER ISRAEL.

Exodus 3: 1-14.

COMMIT vs. 2-4. READ Exodus 3-6.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *And he said, Certainly I will be with thee.* — Ex. 3: 12.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. Read Exodus 3-6, comparing it with Acts 7: 29-35; Heb. 11: 24-27.

2. Compare Elijah's vision on Horeb, 1 Kings 19.

3. Note the way in which Moses remembered this scene in after years, Deut. 33: 1, 16.

4. Note the use that Christ made of the incident, Mark 12: 26, 27; Luke 20: 37, 38.

5. Compare the similar experience of Isaiah, Isaiah 6.

6. Compare with Moses' excuses the excuse of Jeremiah, Jer. 1: 4-10, and Christ's parable, Luke 14: 15-24.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 2-4; Isa. 6: 8; Jer. 1: 7-9.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Primary Department. — Draw, however roughly, on a blackboard or a large piece of paper, a tree with rays of light streaming from it. Place Moses before it, — a figure cut out and fastened on, or a mere straight line. Above the tree print "Go!" and above Moses write his excuses, opposite each excuse God's answer. Rub these out, and get the class to dictate them again.

Intermediate Department. — Continue with "The Life of Moses," Chapter II. Choose the best title from those that are suggested. The scholars may be asked to bring lists of the difficulties that Moses had to meet.

Senior Department. — Topics for discussion, in essays or talks: Fire as a symbol of God. The three great periods of miracles in the Bible, and why. The character of the Sinaitic wilderness. The tribes of Palestine. A study of the value of retirement. A study of divine calls.

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

What did Moses gain from his forty years in the wilderness?

What did the burning bush symbolize?

What one word would sum up God's orders to Moses?

Moses' excuses and the answers.

How God calls us to serve him.

To what service does God call us?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: A Summons to a Great Task, and How It Was Met.

I. THE VOICE FROM THE BURNING BUSH (vs. 1-6).

The bush and what it symbolized.

Moses' reverence and awe.

The reminder of the covenant.

II. THE GREAT SUMMONS TO A GREAT TASK (vs. 7-10).

The joys of the promised land.

The astonishing call.

III. MOSES' OBJECTIONS AND THEIR ANSWERS (vs. 11-14; also to Ex. 4: 17).

First objection, Moses' insignificance.

First answer, God's presence.

Second answer, God's purpose.

Second objection, the people's idolatry.

Answer, the name of the one God.

Third objection, the people's incredulity.

Answer, the gift of miraculous power.

Fourth objection, Moses' slowness of speech.

Answer, an oratorical assistant.

IV. THE GREAT TASK IS BEGUN (Ex. 4: 18-31; chapters 5 and 6).

First step, the conference of elders.

Second step, the demand upon Pharaoh.

The haughty refusal. Bricks without straw.

OUR CALL TO OUR WORK.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — According to the common chronology Moses left Egypt at the age of 40, B. C. 1532. His call was forty years later, B. C. 1492 or 1493. Others place it nearer 1300 or even 1200.

Place. — The portion of the land of Midian where Moses spent the forty years

was probably the southeastern part of the Sinaitic peninsula. The burning bush was on Mount Sinai, between the two arms of the Red Sea. Sinai and Horeb are interchangeable terms, though some think Sinai to be one mountain in the mountain district called Horeb.

Rulers.—The Pharaoh when Moses left Egypt was probably Rameses II. His son, Menephtah, was probably the Pharaoh when Moses was called to deliver Egypt.

Chronological Chimes.—This was the age of the beginnings of Greek civilization, the founding of Athens and of Troy. Egypt was in the height of its glory, especially in the magnificence of its architecture and the development of art.

The Monuments.—Pithom, one of the treasure cities upon which the Hebrews were employed at this time, has been discovered, and in many of the buildings the upper courses show the "bricks without straw." See Lesson VII.

HYMNS OF THE AGES.

"It may not be on the mountain's height,"
Wesley's "Forth in thy name, O Lord! I go."

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Books on Moses referred to in the last lesson. Especially valuable on this lesson are Rawlinson's *Moses, His Life and Times*, and Taylor's *Moses, the Law-giver*. Sermon III. in *The Candle of the Lord*, by Phillips Brooks. Chapter V. in *The Attractive Christ*, by R. S. MacArthur, D.D. Sermon on "The Choice of Moses," by Newman Hall. A strong sermon by Whitefield. Chapter in *The Rod That Budded*, by R. J. Miller, D.D.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Whittier's "The Call of the Christian," and references in "The Vision of Echard" and "Chapel of the Hermits." A beautiful reference in Mrs. Browning's "Aurora Leigh," Book VII. "The Burning Bush," by Keble. "Moses," by Dwight Williams. "Calling of Moses," by George Lansing Taylor. "Moses Meeting the Daughters of Jethro," by Michael Drayton. Sonnet by Richard Wilton. "Moses and Jethro," by Trench. Ingraham's *The Pillar of Fire*.

1. Now Moses ^{was kept} the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the ^{backside} ^{back} of the ^{desert} ^{wilderness}, and came to ^{unto} the mountain of God, Horeb.

2. ² And ³ the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush ^{was} ^{was} not consumed.

3. And Moses said, I will ^{now} turn aside: ^{now}, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.

¹ Ex. 4: 27; 18: 5; 24: 13; Num. 10: 33;
¹ Kings 19: 8.

² 2 Esd. 14: 3; for vs. 2-8, see Acts 7: 30-35.

³ Isa. 63: 9; Mal. 3: 1 (mg.); comp. 2 Esd. 2: 33.

I. The Voice from the Burning Bush.—Vs. 1-6. **1. Now Moses kept** (R. V., "was keeping") **the flock of Jethro.** Also called Reuel. How the Bible glorifies labor! Amos the farmer-shepherd; David the shepherd; Paul the tent-maker; Peter, James, John, the fishermen; Christ the carpenter! It was while Moses was about his common task that the great vision came to him. **The backside of the desert.** Inland, away from the sea. "In our time shepherds, of the eastern low country there, at the beginning of the season take their flocks west, to the central uplands of Sinai, where there is moisture and consequently grass."—*Macgregor*. **The mountain of God.** Horeb, also called Sinai. "Mount Sinai is named after the Babylonian moon-god Sin; and if this be so, it was from the earliest times a place of sanctity."—*Hastings's Bible Dictionary*. Here the Law was given. "The traditional spot of the great experience in the life of Moses is in the vale of Hobab on the north side of Jebel Musa; the convent of St. Catherine now stands on the supposed place, and the altar is said to be on the site of the burning bush."—*MacArthur*.

2. And the angel of the LORD. The visible manifestation of God. **A flame of fire out of the midst of a bush.** A thorn bush, the shittim or acacia common in the desert. It grew from 15 to 25 feet high, with trunks often two feet thick, and it was the wood used in constructing the tabernacle. **The bush burned . . . was not consumed.** Fire is

4. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, ¹ God called unto him out of ² the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here ^{am} I.

5. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: ³ put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest ^{is} ^{is} holy ground.

6. Moreover he said, ⁴ I ^{am} the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for ⁵ he was afraid to look upon God.

7. And the LORD said, ⁶ I have surely seen the affliction of my people which ^{are} ^{are} in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their ⁷ taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;

¹ Ex. 19: 3.

² Deut. 33: 16.

³ Josh. 5: 15; comp. Ex. 19: 12; Eccl. 5: 1.

⁴ Ex. 4: 5; Gen. 28: 13; 1 Kings 18: 36; cited Matt. 22: 32; Mark 12: 26; comp. Luke 20: 37.

⁵ Comp. 1 Kings 19: 13; Isa. 6: 1, 2, 5.

⁶ Ex. 2: 23-25; Neh. 9: 9; Psa. 106: 44.

⁷ Ex. 5: 13, 14.

the best symbol of God. Its light is the source of beauty, comfort, health, and strength. It is powerful, pure and purifying, everywhere present.

ILLUSTRATIONS. "The bush burning, yet not consumed, has always been regarded as an emblem of Israel in Egypt. Moses, in his farewell blessing of the tribes, could find no richer benediction of the sons of Joseph than to wish for them 'the good-will of Him that dwelt in the bush.' The Church of Scotland, therefore, has not made an inappropriate or unwarranted use of this emblem, when, looking at her own history, how she was cradled in persecution, she has put upon her banner a representation of the burning bush, with the legend, '*Nec tamen consumebatur*,' 'Yet it was not consumed.'" — *W. M. Taylor*.

"A sudden wonder before his vision came!
Along the mountain thicket rose a strange and scathless flame!
Above the wild acacias it leaped, as from a pyre,
And wrapped the unscorched copse and towered a tent of lambent fire!"

— *George Lansing Taylor*.

"One towering thorn was wrapped in flame —
Bright without blaze it went and came:
Who would not turn and see?" — *Keble*.

4. **God called unto him.** Thus showing Moses at once that it was not merely an unusual phenomenon of nature, but a manifestation of the supernatural.

5. **Put off thy shoes (sandals) from off thy feet.** Orientals remove their shoes on entering a place of worship, or approaching an important personage. **Holy ground.** Holy, because of the manifested presence of God. "We are not to treat all places alike. When a man loses his sense of religious awe, he has exhausted the supreme fountain of spiritual joy." — *Joseph Parker*.

"Earth's crammed with heaven,
And every common bush afire with God:
But only he who sees, takes off his shoes,
The rest sit round it and pluck blackberries."

— *Mrs. Browning*.

6. **I am the God of thy father.** "Father" is here a collective term, — "fatherhood," ancestors, expanded in the **God of Abraham**, etc. This reminder of the covenant made with the patriarchs is an assurance to Moses that he is in line with them, and is about to witness the fulfilment of that covenant. **And Moses hid his face.** In reverence and fear, as did Elijah on the same "Mount of God." Irreverence is said to be a growing sin, and it is sad to see how many, in church and Sunday school, do not even bow their heads in prayer.

II. **The Great Summons to a Great Task.** — Vs. 7-10. 7. **I have . . . seen . . . have heard.** "God sees what so moved Moses forty years ago!" — *Macgregor*.

"Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience he stands waiting, with exactness grinds he all." — *Longfellow*.

8. ^{And} ^{and} ¹ I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and ² to bring them up out of that land ³ unto a good land and a large, unto a land ⁴ flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of ⁵ the Canaanites, Canaanite, and the Hittites, Hittite, and the Amorites, Amorite, and the Perizzites, Perizzite, and the Hivites, Hivite, and the Jebusites, Jebusite.

9. ^{Now} ^{therefore,} ^{And} ^{now,} behold, ⁶ the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: ^{and} ^{moreover} I have ^{also} seen the ⁷ oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

10. ⁸ Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

11. And Mō'ses said unto God, ⁹ Who ^{am} ^I, that I should go unto Phā'rā'oh, and that I should bring forth the children of Is'ra-el out of Egypt?

12. And he said, ¹⁰ Certainly I will be with thee; and this ^{shall be a} ^{shall be the} token unto thee, that I have sent thee: ^{When} ^{when} thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

¹ Gen. 11: 5, 7; 18: 21.

² Ex. 6: 6; 12: 51; comp. Gen. 50: 24.

³ Deut. 1: 25; 8: 7, 8, 9.

⁴ Ex. 13: 5; 33: 3; Lev. 20: 24; Num. 13: 27; Deut. 26: 9, 15; Jer. 11: 5; 32: 22; Ezek. 20: 6.

⁵ Gen. 15: 18-21.

⁶ Ex. 2: 23.

⁷ Ex. 1: 11-14, 22.

⁸ Comp. Ps. 105: 26; Mic. 6: 4.

⁹ Ex. 6: 12; 1 Sam. 18: 18; Isa. 6: 5, 8.

¹⁰ Gen. 31: 3; Deut. 31: 23; Rom. 8: 31.

8. **Unto a good land and a large.** The Hebrews must have been much crowded in Goshen, but Canaan would be even too large for them to occupy all of it at once (Deut. 7: 22). **Flowing with milk and honey.** This famous proverbial expression, used also by the Greek and Latin writers, is here first used in the Bible. Though Palestine is so barren now, in ancient times it was remarkably fertile. As a land of rich pastures, it flowed with milk; and modern travelers often speak of the abundant stores of honey, from bees wild and domesticated. The Egyptians, by their campaigns in Palestine, had been made familiar with the names of the leading Palestinian tribes, — the Canaanites, dwellers in the lowlands of the Jordan valley and the Mediterranean coast, also a term applied to all the Palestinian tribes, collectively; the Hittites, sons of Heth, a powerful nation in the north with which Egypt had been at war; the Amorites, dwellers in the mountain country on both sides of the Jordan; the Perizzites, perhaps a class of Canaanites, farmers, who lived in unwallled villages; the Hivites, a tribe of central Palestine; the Jebusites, the tribe whose center was Jerusalem.

10. **I will send thee.** These words must have fallen upon Moses' ears like a thunder-clap. Compare Washington, rushing from the hall of Congress when he heard himself mentioned for the leadership of the American army. **Unto Pharaoh.** Thee, a poor shepherd, aged and alone, unto Pharaoh, the mightiest monarch on earth! God often calls his children to such gigantic tasks. As Luther, who himself responded to such a summons, wrote: "If Moses had insisted on knowing the end, and how he was to escape the hosts of Pharaoh, Israel would probably have been in Egypt to this day."

III. **Moses' Objections and Their Answers.** — Vs. 11-14; also to Ex. 4: 17. Moses may have known that Rameses II. had been succeeded by his son Menephtah, a much weaker ruler; but he understood thoroughly the mighty power of Egypt, and, conscious of his own insignificance, it is small wonder that he began to bring forward objections to God's amazing proposal.

FIRST OBJECTION, MOSES' INSIGNIFICANCE. 11. **Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh.** An exile under sentence of death, a shepherd eighty years old going to a magnificent court from which he had been absent forty years, an old man attempting the stupendous task of freeing two million slaves and organizing them into a nation. No wonder Moses faltered.

FIRST ANSWER, GOD'S PRESENCE. 12. **Certainly I will be with thee.** That same power before which Moses was hiding his face would go with him to confront his enemies. Those that resisted him must overcome God himself.

13. And Mō'ses said unto God, Behold, ^{when} I come unto the children of Is'ra-el, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What ^{is} his name? what shall I say unto them?

14. And God said unto Mō'ses, ^{I AM THAT I AM:} and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Is'ra-el, ^{I AM THAT I AM:} ^{I AM} hath sent me unto you.

1 Ex. 6: 3; John 8: 58; 2 Cor. 1: 20.

ILLUSTRATION. The electric wire must be of the material through which electricity can pass freely, but the wire alone cannot move our cars nor light our dwellings. The electricity enables it to do wonders impossible before.

SECOND ANSWER, GOD'S PURPOSE. Ye shall serve God upon this mountain. "The fixing of that future meeting place would serve to give confidence to Moses by showing a resolute, clear purpose on the part of God." — *Macgregor*.

ILLUSTRATION. "It was as if a general should overcome the hesitation of a lieutenant appointed to a difficult task, and show his confidence that all would turn out right, by engaging him to dine with him in a certain house after the work should be done." — *Blaikie*.

SECOND OBJECTION, THE PEOPLE'S IDOLATRY. 13. Moses remembered how ignorant the Hebrews were concerning the God of their fathers. When he brought them a message from that God, they would be sure to ask, What is his name? "The Egyptians had various gods, and Israel, long used to their practices, would be sure to ask after the name of the God whose messenger Moses was. How was he to be named to them?" — *Alford*.

ANSWER, THE NAME OF THE ONE GOD. 14. "What a graven image or some outward symbol was to all other nations, that a *Name*, and a *Name* only, was to the Israelite." — *Hanna*. The name God revealed to Moses was not unknown before (Gen. 22: 14), but it was filled with a new meaning. I AM THAT I AM. Hebrew, 'ehyeh, which, the third person being substituted for the first, becomes *Jahveh*, Jehovah. "There we have the unity of God to the exclusion of the many gods of Egypt; the unchangeableness of God, who lives in an eternal present; the self-sufficiency of God, who alone is his own equivalent." — *F. B. Meyer*.

THIRD OBJECTION, THE PEOPLE'S INCREDULITY. Moses foresaw (Ex. 4: 1) that the people would not believe his story, and, as forty years before, would refuse to follow his lead.

ANSWER, THE GIFT OF MIRACULOUS POWER. "What is that in thine hand?" Jehovah asked; and bestowed upon the common shepherd's staff the power to become a serpent at the bidding of Moses, while the hand itself, thrust into his bosom, became white with leprosy, and, thrust in again, became sound once more. One other miracle, the turning of water into blood, was definitely promised.

ILLUSTRATION. Only a shepherd's staff, to confront Pharaoh's armed hosts! "It was, to human view, like going to shiver the pyramids into fragments with a baby's hammer! But when God is in the case, it is all one whether we work with a rod or with a mighty army." — *W. M. Taylor*.



Prisoners Guiding the Plow.

AT EL-KAB.

FOURTH OBJECTION, MOSES' SLOWNESS OF SPEECH. Moses foresaw that the great task would require much talking, and he was not an orator. "Fluency was not his forte. He saw too much in a moment to be able to give utterance to it all at once. When the bottle is full, its contents pour out less freely by far than when it is two parts empty." — *W. M. Taylor*.

ANSWER, AN ORATORICAL ASSISTANT. "Who hath made man's mouth?" was Jehovah's grand reply. Doubtless if Moses had accepted the assurance, God would have developed the oratorical

power that he certainly possessed, and he would not have been obliged to share with another the glory that God meant for him alone; but he gave a petulant reply, and in just anger the Lord promised him his glib-tongued brother Aaron for an assistant. "Ah, better a thousand times had it been for him to trust God for speech than be thus deposed from his premiership! Aaron shaped the golden calf, and wrought folly in Israel, and became a thorn in the side of the saint of God. And probably in the eyes of their contemporaries Aaron engrossed the greater attention, and had most of the honor and credit of the great deliverance." — *F. B. Meyer.*



A Gang of Syrian Prisoners Making Brick.

FROM THE TEMPLE OF AMON.

IV. The Great Task is Begun. — Ex. 4: 18-31; chapters 5 and 6. Obtaining Jethro's consent to his return, and leaving his wife and children in their safe home, Moses set out upon his perilous undertaking. He was met by Aaron, and the two old men, after an affectionate greeting, formed their plans for the campaign that was to mean so much to the world.

THE FIRST STEP was to call a conference of "the elders of Israel," the heads of families whom the Egyptians had allowed to retain their authority, using them as a convenient means of governing the people. At this notable assembly Aaron told the story of the great summons from the burning bush, and Moses worked the attesting miracles. Immediately the nation accepted with reverent rejoicings the leadership of Moses and Aaron, and to that allegiance, in spite of occasional murmurings, they remained true through all the years of trial that followed.

THE SECOND STEP was to make a formal demand upon Pharaoh, and for that purpose Moses returned — with what emotions we may imagine — to the scenes of splendor he had resigned forty years before. To test the monarch, the demand was made as simple and reasonable as possible, merely the request, after those long years of toil, for a national holiday, that the people might withdraw into the wilderness and celebrate a religious rite. The request was haughtily refused, as Moses had been warned that it would be; and in anger at the people's presumption an impossible task was laid upon them, to make "bricks without straw," to find for themselves the material with which to bind the clay together, while at the same time they were required to turn in at nightfall as many bricks as before. Thus Moses and the dismayed nation found that not only was there no prospect of freedom, but the bondage was heavier than before. It was that darkest hour which comes just before day.

OUR CALL TO OUR WORK.

1. Every one has a work for which God sets him apart, as truly as Moses. No one else can do your work. It may be a little task, but God misses it if it is not done. God is like the conductor of a great orchestra of a hundred pieces who suddenly stopped it in the midst of a wonderful volume of sound. "Where is the piccolo?" he cried.

2. God does not always disclose a man's work early in life. You may be like Moses, or like Bishop French, who was sixty-six when he learned Arabic and began his labors among the Moslems.

3. Nothing is gained by moving ahead of God's time, as Moses did in his first attempt. Too fast in music is as bad as too slow.

4. God knows best how to prepare us for our life work. The training of John Williams as an iron-monger and of Alexander Mackay as an engineer was of the greatest value in their missionary labors.

5. If we are in the course of duty, God's call to great things may come at any time, while we are about our commonest tasks, as it came to Peter while fishing, to Luther in a monk's cell, to General Booth and Robert Raikes and Dr. Barnardo among the poorest of the poor.

6. God's call never comes to two men in the same way.

"Not always as the whirlwind's rush
On Horeb's mount of fear,
Not always as the burning bush
To Midian's shepherd seer,—

Not always thus, with outward sign
Of fire or voice from Heaven,
The message of a truth divine,
The call of God is given!" — *Whittier.*

We must look for God's call in the abilities he gives us, the circumstances in which he places us, the opportunities he opens before us, the advice of wise friends, and the quiet promptings of conscience.

7. Never refuse God's call for fear of inability. "God's commands are enablements." "What is that in thine hand?" If it be but a cobbler's hammer, you can become a William Carey.

8. Every life that faithfully responds to God's calls is a great life in his eyes, whether it is called to lead a nation, or to teach a Sunday-school class, or to help take care of little children at home. The greatness is in the spirit, not the deed. God was not pleased with Moses, though he promised to use him. You can do better with your call than Moses did with his.

"It may not be on the mountain's height,
Or over the stormy sea;
It may not be at the battle's front
My Lord will have need of me;

But if by a still small voice he calls
To paths that I do not know,
I'll answer, 'Dear Lord, with my hand in thine,
I'll go where you want me to go.'"
— *Mary Brown.*

LESSON X. — June 9.

THE PASSOVER. — Exodus 12: 21-30.

COMMIT vs. 26, 27. READ Exodus 7-12.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *When I see the blood, I will pass over you.* — Ex. 12: 13.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. Read the account of the plagues in Exodus 7-11, dividing them into threes, and noting the increasing severity in each triad and throughout the series.

2. Read the reference to the magicians in 2 Tim. 3: 8.

3. Compare the vivid description of the plagues in Joel 1, 2.

4. Read the poetical account of the plagues in Psa. 105: 27-38. Also Psa. 18: 4-14; 78: 42-52.

5. Read the institution of the Passover, Exodus 12.

6. Note some of the many New Testament references to the Passover: John 1: 29; 6: 53; 1 Cor. 5: 6-8; Heb. 9: 14; 11: 28; 1 Pet. 1: 18, 19.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 26, 27; Prov. 1: 24-31; John 1: 29; 1 Pet. 1: 18, 19.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Primary Department. — Drill the scholars on the plagues, what they were and their order, using pictures of the animals concerned, and other symbols, such as ashes for the plague of boils, and a black square for the plague of darkness. Arrange the plagues in threes. In teaching the Passover, try to give the class an understanding of its relation to the Lord's Supper.

Intermediate Department. — Chapter III. in the "Life of Moses" your scholars

are writing. Assign the plagues to different scholars, to report upon them. Ask one scholar to come prepared to explain how the Lord's Supper grew out of the Passover.

Senior Department. — Topics for discussion: Modern illustrations of the plagues. Reasons for believing the account of the plagues to be authentic history. Why the animals were hurt by the plagues. How the plagues must have affected Egyptian religion. Pharaoh's hardened heart. The Passover and the Lord's Supper.

HYMNS OF THE AGES.

"At the Lamb's high feast we sing." "Not all the blood of beasts," by Watts.

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Group the plagues and tabulate the facts relating to them.
What Moses and the Israelites learned from the plagues.
What Pharaoh and the Egyptians learned from the plagues.
How the first Passover was celebrated.
How the Lord's Supper carries on the Passover.
How the exodus was accomplished.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — The plagues lasted nine or ten months, from June to the following April. The Passover, our Easter time, was the full moon of the first month of the Hebrew sacred year, Abib or Nisan, corresponding to the last of March and the first of April. The year (Ussher) was B. C. 1491; or about 1300 according to others. Professor Price makes it 1276.

Place. — The meetings of Moses with Pharaoh were at the capital, Zoan (Tanis), or Memphis. The Passover was observed in the land of Goshen, in northeastern Egypt.

The Pharaoh was probably Menephtah, son of the powerful monarch, Rameses II. *The monuments of Egypt* refer to the death of a son of Menephtah and ominous uprisings in 1276 B. C.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Exodus and books on Moses already mentioned. Breasted's *History of Egypt*. Millington's *Signs and Wonders in the Land of Ham*. Price's *Monuments and the Old Testament*. Sayce's *Higher Criticism and the Monuments*. McCurdy's *History, Prophecy, and the Monuments*. Robinson's *The Pharaohs of the Exodus*. Kellogg's *Abraham, Joseph, and Moses in Egypt*. Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*. Rawlinson's *Egypt and Babylon*. Stanley's *Jewish Church*. Trumbull's *Covenant of Salt and Blood Covenant*. Phillips Brooks's *New Start in Life*, Sermon XX. Wood's *Bible Animals*.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Plagues and the Passover; Their Teachings.

I. THE SECOND APPEAL TO PHARAOH (Ex. 7: 1-13).

Moses' miracles and the magicians' counterfeits.

II. THE FIRST TRIAD OF PLAGUES (Ex. 7: 14-8: 19).

The waters become blood. Frogs. Lice.

III. THE SECOND TRIAD OF PLAGUES (Ex. 8: 20-9: 12).

Flies or beetles. Murrain. Boils.

IV. THE THIRD TRIAD OF PLAGUES (Ex. 9: 13-10: 29).

Hail. Locusts. Darkness.

V. THE LAST PLAGUE: DEATH OF THE FIRSTBORN (Exodus 11).

A summary and classification of the plagues.

VI. THE INSTITUTION OF THE PASSOVER (Ex. 12: 1-22).

The time. The company. The lamb. Unleavened bread. Bitter herbs. The sprinkled blood.

VII. THE MEANING OF THE PASSOVER (vs. 23-28).

A perpetual ordinance. Doom and deliverance.

VIII. THE GREAT DELIVERANCE (vs. 29, 30; also 31-42).

The stroke falls. The great cry in Egypt. The rendezvous at Succoth.

THE TWOFOLD TEACHING.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Emerson's "Boston Hymn." Montgomery's "Chronicle of Angels," Part II. Newton's "The Rod of Moses." Cowley's "The Destroying Angel." Ruskin on Moses' rod, *Elrics of the Dust*, p. 142. Tennyson's "God's Denunciations against Pharaoh-Hopra." Also a reference in Tennyson's "Aylmer's Field." Longfellow's "The Two Angels." Cowper's *Olney Hymns*, XX. and XXIV. Quarles, *Divine Fancies*, I., 81. Milton's *Paradise Lost*, XII., 173-190.

The Bible records fewer miracles than most men think. They are grouped in three great periods, each a critical epoch especially requiring divine interposition, — the times of Moses, when the nation was to be delivered from bondage; the times of Elijah, when the authority of the prophetic order was to be established and the liberty of the people defended against the kings; the times of Christ, when the world was to be redeemed. We study in this lesson the first of these periods of miracles.

I. **The Second Appeal to Pharaoh.** — Ex. 7: 1-13. The sorrows of the people, compelled to make bricks without straw, led to a second appeal to Pharaoh, in the course

of which Moses wrought the three signs that God had given him. But the king's magicians counterfeited what Moses did. "At the present day, after three thousand years, their successors are still performing the same curious trick. The Egyptian juggler takes up in his hand the *naja*,—a small viper,—and, pressing a finger on the nape of its neck, puts it into a catalepsy, which makes it motionless and stiff, like a rod; and when it regains its power of motion, the cheated bystanders fancy that the magician's rod has been changed into a serpent." — *Sharpe*. But the difference between the two kinds of work was shown when Aaron's rod swallowed up all the others.

The result was that Pharaoh still hardened his heart, and refused to let the people go. "There is a legend that Menephtah (probably the Pharaoh here referred to) once hurled his spear at the Nile when its floods rose too high and was punished with ten years of blindness." — *Dean Chadwick*.

II. The First Triad of Plagues. — Ex. 7: 14 — 8: 19. The plagues group themselves in threes, gradually increasing in severity, for God gave Pharaoh every chance to repent. The first triad are plagues of loathsomeness, not inflicting actual pain or injury to life.

1. THE FIRST PLAGUE: TURNING THE WATERS INTO BLOOD (June). This plague was peculiarly offensive to the Egyptians, "the cleanest of all the ancient nations," as Stanley calls them. They could not take their frequent baths, so necessary in that hot climate. They suffered from thirst, for the only water they could drink was the brackish fluid that filtered through the soil into hastily dug wells by the side of the river. Moreover, it was a blow at their sacred Nile, the great water-god Hapi, and the sacred fish, which were killed by the plague.

The physical basis of the miracle was probably "the presence and inconceivably rapid growth of microscopic animals (infusoria) and minute cryptogamous plants of a red color. Ehrenberg, in 1823, saw the whole bay of the Red Sea, at Sinai, turned into the color of blood by the presence of such plants. In *Silliman's Journal* there is an account of a fountain of blood in a cave in South America. It grew solid and burst bottles in which it was put, and dogs ate it greedily. The cause of these wonders is a minute alga which grows so rapidly that it actually flows, and is so small that there are from 40,656,000,000,000 to 884,736,000,000,000 plants in a cubic inch." — *Geikie*. Osburn (*Monumental History of Egypt*, I., p. 10) saw the Nile one morning when "the entire mass of the waters was opaque, and of a dark red, more like blood than anything else to which I could compare it."

The miraculous nature of this event is proved by its coming just when Moses called for it, by its enormous extent, and by its affecting even the water in ponds, reservoirs, and household vessels. The magicians imitated it, but necessarily only on a very small scale. But Pharaoh was not moved by the portent. Doubtless his personal wants were attended to, and he did not care for his people, or mind the insult to his gods.

2. THE SECOND PLAGUE: THE FROGS (autumn). This also was a challenge to the Egyptian religion, for the Egyptians worshipped the frog-headed goddess Hehka. Therefore as the horrible croaking animals swarmed everywhere, even into the kneading-troughs and the beds, they were forbidden to kill them, but must endure their clammy presence. Besides, the repulsive visitation came out of the sacred Nile.

The physical basis of the miracle was the fact that "in the height of the inundation, the abounding moisture quickens inconceivable myriads of frogs and toads, which swarm everywhere even in ordinary years." — *Geikie*. "Ancient secular history has plagues of frogs, one of which actually drove the people out of their country." — *Macgregor*. Thus it was an ordinary visitation, enormously magnified by supernatural means. The court magicians imitated it by some slight of hand; but the king for the first time was moved, promising to let the people go, if Moses would send away the frogs. This was done, but Pharaoh still hardened (literally, "made heavy") his heart. "This tergiversation provoked God to send upon Egypt, without any previous notice or warning, the third plague." — *Rawlinson*.

3. THIRD PLAGUE: THE LICE (October to November). Sir Samuel Baker says of modern North Africa that "at certain seasons it is as if the very dust of the land were turned into lice," and describes "a sort of tick, not larger than a grain of sand, which, when filled with blood, expands to the size of a hazel nut." The R. V. margin has "sand flies or fleas." Such vermin was especially hated by the Egyptians, whose priests shaved their entire bodies every other day to make sure against it; and now they found the pollution even upon the carefully-kept sacred animals! Moreover, the plague sprung from the sacred soil. At this point the magicians ceased their weak imitations, telling Pharaoh, "This is

the finger of God,"—"historically interesting as the first definition of miracle."—*Macgregor*.

III. **The Second Triad of Plagues.**—Ex. 8: 20—9: 12. In this group of plagues the property of the Egyptians is involved as well as their persons; the land of Goshen, where the Hebrews dwelt, is pointedly exempted from the visitations; and Moses no longer makes use of the rod, as if to show that no magic virtue resides in that piece of wood.

1. **FOURTH PLAGUE: FLIES OR BEETLES** (November). The Hebrew word for the plague is held to mean *a mixture*, i. e., various swarms of animals. The Septuagint translators, who lived in Egypt, considered it to mean *dog-flies*, a fierce, bold, and torturing insect. Others consider that it was *beetles*, a peculiarly terrible plague, because the beetle was an incarnation of Khepra, the sun-god, and thus could not be killed. The most sacred Egyptian symbol, everywhere sculptured and painted, was the scarabæus, or common dung beetle. Modern Egypt is sometimes visited with enormous swarms of beetles, which "inflict very painful bites, gnaw and destroy clothes, household furniture, and leather, and consume or render unavailable all eatables."—*Kalisch*. This plague was removed at Pharaoh's entreaty, and his false promise to let the people go.

2. **FIFTH PLAGUE: THE MURRAIN** (December or January). The murrain (Latin, *morior*, die) is "a malignant epizootic contagious fever, affecting domestic animals." It is common in Egypt, especially after the subsidence of the Nile floods. "There were severe murrains in the years 1842, 1863, and 1866, in which last-named year nearly the whole of the herds were destroyed."—*Rawlinson*. This occurrence was marked as a miracle by its severity, its predication for a definite day, the exemption of the Hebrews' cattle, and the fact that many kinds of domestic animals were attacked at once. Much of the wealth of Egypt consisted of cattle. The monuments tell of one man who owned more than a thousand oxen and cows, 2235 goats, 974 sheep, and 750 asses. Moreover, white cows were sacred to Isis, and goats to Amon, and sheep were worshipped at Thebes. The very animals in which the gods themselves were supposed to live may have been killed at this time, filling all Egypt with horror.

3. **SIXTH PLAGUE: BOILS OR BLAINS.** This plague arose from the symbolic sprinkling toward heaven of ashes from a furnace, it may be a smelting furnace for iron, perhaps in allusion to the furnace of affliction through which the Hebrews had been made to pass, or perhaps in sarcastic imitation of the Egyptian priests who yearly offered sacrifices of burned human bodies—often Hebrews—to Set or Typhon, the god of Evil, scattering the ashes thus in the air. The plague was some inflammatory sore on the surface of the body, painful and disgusting. It even drove the magicians from the scene altogether.

IV. **The Third Triad of Plagues.**—Ex. 9: 13—10: 29. In this series of plagues "a new aspect of awfulness now appears in the circumstance that the physical agency is no longer of local origination from within the land, but comes from the general system of the world; as if there now had been an invasion of Egypt on the part of the unseen universe beyond it. The rod is now resumed."—*Macgregor*.

1. **SEVENTH PLAGUE: HAIL.** The state of the crops destroyed points to February as the time of this visitation; hail, too, can fall only at that time of the year. The plague was preceded by a solemn warning, as were the initial plagues of the other triads. "The hailstones must have been of extraordinary size. Probably they were those rough, jagged pieces of ice such as sometimes fall in Europe in great hailstorms, which have been known to weigh from six ounces to half a pound."—*Rawlinson*. The Egyptians were terribly impressed, because hail is almost unknown in that land, and thunder and lightning are rare. Plants, beasts, and men were all smitten by the celestial artillery, and Pharaoh was so alarmed that for the first time he acknowledged that he had sinned. Yet, when the plague was removed at his entreaty, he "hardened his heart."

2. **EIGHTH PLAGUE: LOCUSTS.** Pharaoh quailed at the threat of this plague, and for the first time the courtiers joined Moses' demands. They knew well what awful scenes would follow if the locusts should devour what was left from the hail. But, as before Pharaoh had limited his consent, requiring the sacrifice to be *in Egypt*, so now he limited it by holding back the women and children of the Hebrews as hostages. But Moses would have no compromise; the plague fell. Such an inrush of locusts, only far less extensive, is common in Egypt, and usually in March. "It often happens that immense swarms of locusts come in from Nubia. Wherever they appear they cover the ground for miles, and sometimes to the depth of two or more feet. It is in vain to attempt to drive them away. Only when the last bit of grain or grass is devoured do they depart, leaving behind those who in the dense mass of insects were hurt and cannot go further. It takes weeks to kill



A Cloud of Locusts.

From an old English Print.

these remnants.” — From *Die Plagen Egyptens*. “In 1881, 250 tons of locusts were buried in Cyprus, each ton numbering over 90,000,000 of these pests.” — *Daily News*. The visitation was so fearful that Pharaoh sent for Moses in haste, and again confessed his sin and begged for a removal of the curse. This time the solemn record is that the Lord hardened Pharaoh’s heart, and not Pharaoh himself.

3. NINTH PLAGUE: DARKNESS. Like the final plagues of the other triads, this comes without warning; and it is the most awful of all. Again, we have a physical basis for the stupendous miracle. “In April, about Easter, there begins in Egypt a period of fifty days, called *Chamsin*, i. e., fifty. During this period the south wind at times brings a fine sand storm in great masses. Wherever the storm passes is heard a cracking sound as of electric sparks. A nervous depression seizes mankind. This is the Egyptian darkness.” — From *Die Plagen Egyptens*. “Artificial light at such times is of little use. The streets are perfectly empty, and a deep silence reigns everywhere.” — *Geikie*. Compare the London fogs. This “dark of deep darkness” moved Pharaoh to grant Moses’ request, but keeping back the flocks and herds of the Hebrews; a miserable compromise which Moses rejected.

V. The Last Plague: Death of the Firstborn. — Exodus 11. Pharaoh and his people had been given every opportunity to repent. Even the divine patience had ceased to endure their hard and cruel and deceitful hearts. The final and decisive plague was announced, and described with accuracy; but before its actual infliction several days elapsed, that the people of Israel might be prepared for the exodus. One important step was the asking (*not* “borrowing” — see R. v.) of jewels, the most easily carried form of wealth, from the Egyptians. It was only right that the Hebrews should have a little return for their long service, and what their masters gave them was far less than their due.

Before passing, let us get a general view of

THE TEN GREAT PLAGUES.

	PLAGUES.	TIME.	WARNING.	GOSHEN.	MAGICIANS.	PHARAOH.	
First Triad	1. Bloody waters	June	Full	Goshen	Imitate	Refuses	Plagues of loathsomeness. Aaron’s rod
	2. Frogs	Fall	Less	not	Imitate	Refuses	
	3. Lice	October	None	exempt	Fail	Refuses	
Second Triad	4. Flies or Beetles	December	Full	Goshen	Yields a little Refuses	Refuses	Property losses and bodily pain No rod used
	5. Murrain		Less	exempt			
	6. Boils		None	in 4, 5, 6,	Withdraw	Refuses	
Third Triad	7. Hail	February	Full	7, and	Courtiers interpose	Confesses sin	Nature plagues Invasions from without Moses’ rod
	8. Locusts	March	Less	probably		Confesses sin	
	9. Darkness	April	None	8, 9, as		Promises falsely	
	10. Death of firstborn	April	Full	in 10		Urges them to go	

21. Then Mō'ses called for all the elders of Is'ra-el, and said unto them, ¹Draw out, and take you ^a ^α ^{lamb} ^{lamb} according to your families, and kill the passover.

22. ² And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip ^{it} ^{it} in the blood that ^{is} ^{is} in the bason, and ³strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that ^{is} ^{is} in the bason; and none of you shall go out ^{at} ^{of} the door of his house until the morning.

23. ⁴For the LORD will pass through to smite the E-gyp'tians; and when he seeth the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will pass over the door, and ⁵will not suffer ⁶the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite ^{you}. ^{you}.

¹ V. 3; Num. 9: 4; Matt. 26: 18; Mark 14: 12-16; Luke 22: 7.

² Heb. 11: 28.

³ V. 7.

⁴ Vs. 12, 13.

⁵ Ezek. 9: 6; Rev. 7: 3.

⁶ 2 Sam. 24: 16; 1 Cor. 10: 10.

^a Or, kids.

VI. The Institution of the Passover. — Ex. 12: 1-22, 43-50. While the Israelites, protected by the effect of the plagues, were making preparations for their departure, they were also preparing for a great and beautiful ceremony, ordained by God, which should at the same time arouse their religious feeling, and bind them together more firmly as a nation. It extended from the fourteenth to the twenty-first day of the month *Abib*, afterwards called *Nisan*, corresponding nearly to the last half of March and the first half of April. Hebrew months began with the new moon, so that the Passover came always at the time best for travelling, the time of full moon. The religious year began at this time; the civil year began with the month *Tisri*, including the last of September and the first of October.

21. The elders of Israel. The heads of families, in authority over the rest. **Draw out and take.** Either "withdraw into the fields," or "draw out from the fold or flock." **A lamb** (R. V., "lamb") **according to your families.** It was to be a family festival, thus recognizing the family as the true foundation of the state. Neighbors, however, were allowed to combine till enough were brought together to eat all the lamb; for, to prevent the possibility of profanity and superstitious abuse, no part of the animal was to be left. Only *the best* was thus to be offered, a lamb without blemish. It was to be *in its full vigor*, a year old. It was to be a *male*, since it took the place of the firstborn of Israel. It was not to be eaten raw or boiled, but *roasted*, partly because it thus retained all its juices, and partly to symbolize the sufferings of the Israelites in Egypt. *Unleavened bread* only was to be used, as leaven was the symbol of impurity, and of the idolatrous and corrupt practices which the Israelites were to leave behind them in Egypt. *Bitter herbs* were to be eaten with it, — endive, chicory, wild lettuce, and nettles, — as a symbol of the bitterness of their bondage, and, later, to represent the bondage of sin and their repentance. The feast was to be eaten with the long robes girded about the loins, their feet shod with shoes not otherwise worn in the house, and with the traveller's staff in their hand, all ready for their departure. So are we to eat our Lord's Passover, as ready for his service, as pilgrims to the promised land. **And kill the passover.** The Passover lamb.

22. Take a bunch of hyssop. A bushy herb, "thought by some to have been a species of marjoram (*Origanum maru*); by others, the caper-bush (*Capparis spinosa*); and by the author of *The History of Bible Plants* to have been the name of any common article in the form of a brush or a broom." — *Standard Dictionary*. **Dip it in the blood that is in the bason**, in which it had been caught. The blood represented the life of the animal. **Strike the lintel**, the part of the door-frame which lies across the door-



Hyssopus Officinalis.
Common Hyssop.

24. And ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance to thee and to thy sons for ever.

25. And it shall come to pass, when ye be come to the land which the LORD will give you, ¹according as he hath promised, that ye shall keep this service.

26. ²And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service?

27. ^{That} ye shall say, ³It ^{is} the sacrifice of the LORD's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Is'ra-el in E'gypt, when he smote the E-gyp'tians, and delivered our houses. And the people ⁴bowed the head and worshipped.

¹ Ex. 3: 8, 17.

² Ex. 13: 8, 14; Deut. 32: 7; Psa. 78: 6.

³ V. 11.

⁴ Ex. 4: 31.



From Trumbull's "Pilgrimage to Jerusalem,"
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Symbols of the Passover.

Marks of fresh blood over the doorway of a house in Rāmallāh in imitation of the original rite.

posts, overhead, and the two side posts; which thus represented the entire house, with all its inmates. **None of you shall go out.** There was no safety except within the portals marked with the blood.

VII. The Meaning of the Passover. — Vs. 23-28. **23. The LORD.** Jehovah. **When he seeth the blood.** The token of faith and obedience. **Will pass over the door.** Hence the word Passover, the Hebrew *Pesach* (Greek, *Pascha*) having the same meaning. **The destroyer.** Whatever agency God used to slay the firstborn. This was really a blood covenant with God and with one another. "As the closest and most sacred covenant between man and man . . . is a possibility through the inter-flowing of a common blood; so the closest and most sacred of covenants between man and God . . . has been looked upon as a possibility through the proffer and acceptance of a common blood-flow." — *Henry Clay Trumbull*.

24. Ye shall observe this thing for an ordinance . . . for ever. "The Passover feast remains to this day an enduring memorial of the exodus, inexplicable except as the commemoration of a historical fact, and testifying by its name to the nature of the fact commemorated." — *Rawlinson*. Taken up into the Lord's Supper, it is celebrated all over the world, wherever Christians as well as Jews are found.

26. What mean ye by this service? A very proper question to ask; any form of worship, observed without a deep sense of its meaning, soon degenerates into superstition.

27. Ye shall say. Analyzing this brief but wonderfully comprehensive interpretation of the Passover, and therefore of the Lord's Supper, it includes (1) the doom of death, (2) the sacrifice of an innocent lamb, (3) the supernatural redemption of those who in faith accept the sacrifice, and (4) the destruction of those who have not obtained that salvation. Of all this the Passover is the perpetual symbol and commemoration. No wonder the people bowed the head and worshipped.

28. And the children of Is'ra-el went ^{away}, and ¹ did ^{so}, as the LORD had commanded Mō'ses and Aar'on, so did they.

29. ² And it came to pass: ^{that} at midnight, ^{that} ³ the LORD smote all the firstborn in the land of E'gypt, ⁴ from the firstborn of Phā'raōh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that ^{was} ^{was} in the ^a dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle.

30. And Phā'raōh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the E-gyp'tians; and there was a ⁵ great cry in E'gypt; for ^{there was} ^{there was} not a house where ^{there was} ^{there was} not one dead.

¹ Heb. 11: 28.

² Ex. 11: 4.

³ Num. 8: 17; Psa. 78: 51.

⁴ Ex. 4: 23.

⁵ Ex. 11: 6; Jas. 2: 13.

^a Hebrew, *house of the pit*.

VIII. **The Great Deliverance.** — Vs. 29, 30; also 31-42. 29. **The LORD smote all the firstborn.** Either directly, or by angels, or perhaps by some terrible pestilence supernaturally guided against the firstborn alone. They were the representatives of all Egypt, the pride and joy of the land, and it had been abundantly proved that nothing less than this stroke would free the Israelities.

30. **There was a great cry in Egypt.** "The loud, frantic funeral wail characteristic of the nation." — *Stanley*. **Not a house where there was not one dead.** Why were all the people thus fearfully afflicted, when the blame rested so largely on Pharaoh alone? Partly because great numbers of the Egyptians must have joined with Pharaoh in heaping sorrows upon the enslaved Hebrews. Partly because the innocent must always suffer with the guilty if their lives are closely bound together by social ties, and even when they are not. This fact should lead us, for selfish reasons if for no other, to drive evil from the world. And why were the animals, who surely were wholly innocent, involved in the doom? Because they were objects of worship, and in no better way could God prove the worthlessness of the Egyptian gods.

The awful stroke fell at midnight, and immediately the entire land was filled with bitter anguish and with terror. Pharaoh, whose own boy lay dead, the heir to his throne, could not wait for morning, but sent in the night, praying the Hebrews to be gone, and making no conditions this time. "And, poor man, he utters a touching prayer, 'Bless me also!'" — *Blaikie*. Setting out under the Passover moon, the Israelites went from the land of Rameses or Goshen. They journeyed first to the district of Succoth, a region in the extreme eastern part of Goshen, whose chief city was that very Pithom which they had helped to build, and which has recently been positively identified. There they camped for a few days, while from all parts to which they had scattered the Hebrews gathered together, themselves in desperate eagerness for liberty, and their former masters in equal eagerness to send them away. The great deliverance had actually begun.

EXAMPLES FROM HISTORY. 1. "In illustration of the event, a sudden retreat is recorded of a whole nomadic people — 400,000 Tartars — under cover of a single night, from the confines of Russia into their native deserts as late as the close of the last century." — *Stanley*.

2. "In our own times, in this very century, we have witnessed an exodus from that very land of Goshen where the Israelites dwelt. Mohammed Ali wished to manufacture silk; so he planted Goshen with mulberry trees, and attracted Syrians from Damascus and Bedouin Arabs from Babylon, to whom he gave fertile pasture lands and freedom from taxation and military practice. They prospered and multiplied for many years. After the death of Mohammed Ali an attempt was made to tax and conscript them. Protests were disregarded. Thereupon in one night the whole population with their herds and flocks moved away to their kinsfolks to the east of Egypt, leaving their houses empty and the valley a desolation, in which condition it was when De Lesseps dug his fresh-water canal. It is vain to criticize the truth of what we see accomplished under our own eyes." — *Bishop C. H. Fowler*.

THE TWOFOLD TEACHING.

1. **THE LESSON OF THE PLAGUES.** The great, outstanding lesson of those terrible events is this: "Harden not your hearts." Three different words in the original, meaning to *make hard*, *make strong*, or *make heavy* and dull, are all translated "harden." All of

these are used of Pharaoh's treatment of himself before they are used of God's treatment of Pharaoh. After Pharaoh had hardened his heart against the influences of seven plagues, all seeking to bring about his repentance, then the hardening of his heart is ascribed to God. His yielding after that would be due not to penitence but to prudence and fear. God never hardens a willing and obedient heart, or a heart that has not definitely decided for evil. When Pharaoh had hardened his own heart, so that there was no possible hope of his yielding obedience, then God, by his providence, by natural law, perhaps by the withdrawal of special influences, let him go on in his high-handed and blind course to his own destruction. It is simply an illustration of that final permanence to which character attains, a truth so emphatically and solemnly stated on the last page of the Bible (Rev. 22: 11).

2. THE LESSON OF THE PASSOVER. If the lesson of the plagues is a mighty warning, that of the Passover is an abiding comfort and confidence. God, it teaches us, is round about his people, and no harm can befall those that trust in him. One of the most wonderful proofs of Christianity is the exact parallelism between this crowning event of the Old Testament, the Passover, and the crowning event of the New Testament, the sacrifice upon Calvary of the Lamb of God. In the blackness of midnight, while sin was at its highest, he also died, without blemish, and not a bone of him was broken. In the Lord's Supper we eat his flesh symbolically and drink his blood, and remember with worshipping gratitude how he has saved us from the bondage and death of sin.

" Blessings forever on the Lamb,
Who bore the curse for wretched men;
Let angels sound his sacred name,
And every creature say, Amen." — *Isaac Watts.*

LESSON XI. — June 16.

ISRAEL'S ESCAPE FROM EGYPT. — Exodus 14: 13-27.

COMMIT vs. 13, 14. READ Ex. 13: 1-15: 21.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Thus the Lord saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore.* — Ex. 14: 30.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. Read the full account of the escape, Ex. 13: 17 — 14: 31.

2. Read the account of the journeys of the Israelites from Goshen to the Red Sea, Num. 33: 1-8.

3. Read the reference to the pillar of cloud and fire, Ps. 78: 14.

4. Compare the accounts of the crossing in Ps. 77: 16-20; 106: 7-12.

5. Note the references to the crossing in later writings: Ps. 66: 6; 78: 13; 93: 3, 4; Isa. 51: 10; Acts 7: 36; Heb. 11: 29.

6. Read the account of the storm at the crossing attempted by the Egyptians, Ps. 18: 1-19.

7. Read the song of Moses, Ex. 15: 1-21.

8. Note the reference to it in Rev. 15: 2, 3.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 13, 14; Rev. 15: 3; Isa. 51: 10.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Primary Department. — This lesson gives an excellent chance for the sand table. Use two pieces of mirrors laid together for the Red Sea, and pull them apart showing the sand underneath when the time comes for the crossing. The mountain barrier will be made. An army of black pins may repre-

sent the Egyptians and white pins the Israelites, with a large pin for Moses. Do not try to represent the mysterious pillar.

Intermediate Department. — Ask each scholar to bring in a list of the events of the lesson, written in order; also to draw a diagram showing the situation at the Red Sea. Chapter IV. in the "Life of Moses" will be brought in. One scholar may be asked to prepare an account of the lesson events imagining that he is a Hebrew boy that was among those that escaped, and another

scholar may write an account imagining that he is an Egyptian farmer looking down on the scene from the mountain.

Senior Department.— Problems that may be assigned to members of the class for discussion: Why did Moses make the turn at Etham? Where was the crossing? How much of the events of the lesson was natural and how much supernatural? Was Pharaoh drowned? Why were the Egyptian soldiers drowned, though many were probably innocent? When was Moses' song composed?

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The three possible routes. The one chosen, and why.
The pillar of cloud and fire: what it was and what it did.
Why Pharaoh pursued the Israelites.
What was natural and what supernatural in the crossing?
How the Egyptians were destroyed.
How the lesson shows God's providence.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Great Deliverance at the Red Sea: How God Protects His People.

I. THE DIVINE GUIDANCE (Ex. 13: 17-14: 4).

The three possible routes.
The Great Wall.
The pillar of cloud and fire.
An apparent trap.

II. PHARAOH'S PURSUIT (Ex. 14: 5-9).

The delay for funerals.
Pharaoh's change of mind.
The force that Pharaoh raised.

III. THE DIVINE ENCOURAGEMENT (vs. 10-18).

The people's fears and complaints.
The superb faith of Moses.
God's command and promise.

IV. THE MIRACULOUS PASSAGE (vs. 19-22).

The transference of the pillar.
How the waters were divided.
The birth of a new nation.

V. THE OVERTHROW OF THE EGYPTIANS (vs. 23-31).

The Egyptians pursue.
The storm and the change of wind.
The destruction of Pharaoh's host. Illustrations.

VI. THE SONGS OF THANKSGIVING (Ex. 15: 1-21).

Lessons for us from this great event.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.— According to the common chronology, B. C. 1491; according to Brugsch, 1300; Price, 1276. Breasted places Menephtah's death in 1215. The last of March or the first of April.

Place.— They started from Succoth and Rameses, in Goshen; travelled northeastward to the frontier district of Etham, and then southward to the head of the Red Sea near the present Suez, or perhaps near the present Bitter Lakes, if the Red Sea then extended so far north.

The Pharaoh was probably Menephtah (Merneptah), son of Rameses II. There are indications in the inscriptions of the sudden death of his oldest son, whose tomb has been discovered at Thebes, unfinished. The closing years of Menephtah's reign were greatly troubled, with many indications of the breaking up of the kingdom.

THE LESSON IN LITERATURE.

Rebecca's hymn in Scott's *Ivanhoe*. Whittier's "The Rock in El Ghor." Moore's "Come not, O Lord!" and "Sound the Loud Timbrel." Longfellow's "The Slave Singing at Midnight." Holmes's "Sherman's in Savannah," "Manhood," "Idols," "To Canaan," "Army Hymn," and "Hymn—The Word of Promise." "Moses," by Dwight Williams. Mrs. Whitney's "Exodus" and "Under the Cloud and through the Sea." Milton's *Paradise Lost*, XII, 190-226. Quarles, *Divine Fancies*, I, 84. "Pi-hahiroth," by Charles Lawrence Ford.

HYMNS OF THE AGES.

"Guide me, O thou great Jehovah." Addison's "How are thy servants blessed, O Lord!"

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The best help in understanding the exodus is Dr. H. C. Trumbull's *Kadesh Barnea*. See also Breasted's *History of Egypt*, Dawson's *Egypt and Syria*, pp. 43-61, and *Modern Science in Bible Lands*, pp. 367-437; Thayer's *The Hebrews and the Red Sea*; Bartlett's *Egypt to Palestine*, pp. 155-185; Edersheim's *Exodus*; Osburn's *Monumental Egypt*; Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*; W. H. Rule's *Oriental Records*, II, p. 86; Sayce's *Higher Criticism and the Monuments*; Price's *The Monuments and the Old Testament*. Josephus, *Antiquities*, II, 16, 3. Philo, *Life of Moses*, I, 32. On the song of Moses, *The Expositor's Bible*.



- The probable route of the Israelites.
- - - - - The northern route according to Dawson.
- ~~~~~ The Great Wall, Shur.
- - - - - Suez Canal.

I. The Divine Guidance.

— EX. 13: 17—14: 4. THREE GREAT ROUTES led out of Egypt to the east. 1. *The Philistia Road*, or “the way of the land of the Philistines” (Ex. 13: 17), was the northern road, and crossed the line of the lakes which form the bed of the modern Suez Canal just north of Lake Ballah, at a point still known as El-Dan-tarah, “the bridge.” It runs along the Mediterranean Sea, and is the shortest, easiest, and best watered route; but if the Israelites took it, they would be obliged to pass through the country of the warlike Philistines, who would resist any attempt of such a multitude to enter their land. 2. *The Wall Road*, “the Way of Shur,” i. e., wall (Gen. 16: 7), is the central road, starting from the

northern end of Lake Timsah, near the modern town Ismailia. It goes straight into the desert, and leads to Palestine by way of Beersheba and Hebron. It was probably along this road that Abraham and Jacob went into Egypt. But there was a long stretch of desert, and it would require a continuous miracle to sustain the people and their flocks. 3. *The Red Sea Road*, “the Way of the Wilderness of the Red Sea” (Ex. 13: 18), was the road “which swept across the wilderness, between the two arms of the Red Sea, from the head of the Gulf of Suez to the head of the Gulf of Akabah.” It is to-day the great route of the pilgrim caravans to Mecca.

The natural choice of Moses was the first route, the northern or Philistia Road. He was not yet guided by the pillar of fire, nor, in the first flush of victory over Pharaoh, did he probably realize the weakness of the Hebrews, and their need of long discipline before they could conquer the Canaanites.

THE GREAT WALL, which stretched across the isthmus to the east of the present Suez Canal, was the first barrier to confront the Israelites. Like the Great Wall of China, this immense line of fortified wall had been built to protect Egypt from the lawless desert tribes, as well as the more formidable powers beyond them. The Israelites met it at Etham, the Egyptian *Khetam*, meaning *fortification*,—a border district northeast of Succoth. Very likely the garrisons that manned the wall had not been apprised of Pharaoh’s willingness to let the Hebrews go, and they may have opposed their exit. At any rate, the sight of the horrible desert, and of the Egyptian soldiers, must have caused the Israelites to realize, even in the midst of their exultation, something of the immense difficulties that lay before them on the way to Canaan, and in the conquest of the fierce tribes that inhabited the land. Another reason, however, for their change of route is assigned by Scripture, namely, God’s knowledge that the people were unable to meet the Philistines.

THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND OF FIRE made its appearance at Etham, “never again to desert that pilgrim band till the Jordan was crossed and it had settled down to brood over the house of God.”—*F. B. Meyer*. It was the presence of Jehovah, manifested in a supernatural fire, which gave off a lofty column of smoke, visible afar over the host by day, while at night the flames were reflected brightly upon the smoke, like the inner fires of Vesuvius that illuminate the cloud cap of the volcano. Some signal was needed to guide the great mass of people. Moreover, the cloud was a protection against the heat of the sun; and, best of all, it afforded a constant assurance that God had not left them to themselves.

“When Israel, of the Lord beloved,
Out from the land of bondage came,
Her fathers’ God before her moved,
An awful guide, in smoke and flame.

By day, along the astonished lands
The cloudy pillar glided slow;
By night, Arabia’s crimsoned sands
Returned the fiery column’s glow.”
—*Rebecca’s Hymn in Scott’s Ivanhoe.*

13. And Mō'ses said unto the people, ¹ Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will ^{shew to} work for you ^{to day:} ^{to day:} "for the E-gyp'tians whom ye have seen ^{to day,} ^{to-day,} ye shall see them again no more for ever.

¹ 2 Chron. 20 : 15, 17 ; Isa. 41 : 10.

a Or, for whereas ye have seen the Egyptians to day.

" Be Thou a pillared flame to show
The midnight snare, the silent foe ;
And when the battle thunders loud,
Still guide us in its moving cloud."
— *Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

" God send his angels, Cloud and Fire,
To lead us o'er the desert sand !
God give our hearts their long desire,
His shadow in a weary land !"
— *John Greenleaf Whittier.*

ILLUSTRATIONS. "We are told that in the campaigns of Alexander the Great he caused to be set up beside his tent a lofty pole, which had at the top a cresset filled with combustible materials, which were always burning. Thus every one could distinguish his headquarters in the day by a cloud of smoke, and in the night by the flaming fire." — *W. M. Taylor.* Such a contrivance was used by the Egyptian, Persian, and other oriental armies. These, however, are only illustrations, for the pillar of cloud and fire was plainly supernatural.

AN APPARENT TRAP. Led southward by their new, mysterious guide, the Israelites kept on the Egyptian side of the Great Wall, because there alone could they find food for their cattle. They were conducted to a position "which any leader of ordinary capacity would have avoided, and which, unless divinely commanded, Moses would certainly never have occupied." — *Rawlinson.* The Gulf of Suez, the western arm of the Red Sea, lay in front of them. A mountain range, Baal-zephon, checked their further progress southward. The hostile cities of Egypt lay to the west and north. "Many authorities suppose that the Gulf of Suez then stretched further to the north than it does now, and extended to the Bitter Lakes and Lake Timsah, and believe that the Israelites reached it near Ismailia. On the other hand, some identify Baal-zephon with Mt. Attāka, and so bring the Israelites into the neighborhood of the modern town of Suez." — *Wade.* The shoals of the Red Sea, at its head, "have been forded, occasionally, by caravans; notably by Niebuhr in 1762, and in 1779 by Napoleon Bonaparte, and his staff, where he made a narrow escape with his life." — *Humphrey.*

II. Pharaoh's Pursuit. — Ex. 14: 5-9. Some time must have elapsed before Pharaoh would have pursued the Hebrews. "The piety of the Egyptians to the dead was so great that the weightiest political affairs would necessarily be neglected while the king paid the last honors to his dead son. Besides, the families of the officers and soldiery had also been universally bereaved." — *Geikie.* But Pharaoh soon found time to repent of having let the Israelites go. "The public works stood still for lack of labor. Vast territories were suddenly unoccupied. There was a sudden loss of revenue and service which he could ill dispense with." — *F. B. Meyer.* It was not long, therefore, before the Pharaoh's pride and sense of loss impelled him to start in pursuit of his slaves. "Under Menephtah, the chariot force of the army had been more assiduously encouraged than under any other of the Pharaohs." — *Geikie.* With 600 of his best chariots, and a large force of ordinary troops, the king started in hot haste. They proceeded "in orderly march, with the confidence of trained armies moving against an unarmed and panic-stricken mob." — *March.*

III. The Divine Encouragement. — Ex. 14: 10-18. "The sea before and that serried host behind, — it was a miserable alternative to men who could neither fight nor swim." — *Hamilton.* "Never before were a people in so evil a case; to the right of them and to the left of them rose lofty mountains, and behind them were the soldiers of Egypt. But one way was open — the way upward, the way to God's throne and heart." — *R. S. MacArthur, D. D.* The fickle and ungrateful people, however, turned upon Moses with bitter reproaches. His answer is one of the grandest exhibitions of faith recorded in the Bible.

13. And Moses said unto the people. "To face an exasperated crowd is said to be one of the greatest trials of courage. Moses bore that test, and quieted the crowd." — *Blaikie.* Stand still, without attempting the impossible task of saving yourselves, and see the salvation of the LORD. "It was not the children of Israel who brought themselves out of Egypt. They were a set of poor crouching slaves. It was not Moses who brought them out. He had once aspired to that honor, but shame and exile had followed his efforts. It was the Lord who brought them out." — *F. D. Maurice.*

14. ¹The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall ²hold your peace.

15. And the LORD said unto Mō'ses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Is'ra-el, that they go forward:

16. ^{But} ^{And} ³lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Is'ra-el shall go ^{on dry ground through the} ^{into the midst of the sea on} dry ground.

17. And I, behold, I will ⁴harden the hearts of the E-gyp'tians, and they shall ^{follow} ^{go in after} them: and I will ⁵get me honour upon Phā'raōh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

18. And the E-gyp'tians ⁶shall know that I ^{am} the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Phā'raōh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

¹ V. 25; Deut. 1: 30; Josh. 10: 14; 2 Chron. 20: 29; Isa. 31: 4.

² Isa. 30: 15.

³ V. 21, 26; Ex. 7: 19.

⁴ V. 8; Ex. 7: 3.

⁵ V. 4.

⁶ V. 4.

ILLUSTRATION. "There are moments when vast blessings are gained through our own exertions. Such, in Jewish history, was the conquest of Palestine by Joshua, the deliverances wrought by Gideon, by Samson, and by David. Such, in Christian history, were the revolutions effected by Clovis, by Charlemagne, by Alfred, by Joan of Arc, and by Luther. But there are moments of still higher interest when deliverance is brought about not by any human energy, but by causes beyond our own control. Such, in Christian history, are the raising of the siege of Leyden, and the overthrow of the Armada; and such, above all, was the passage of the Red Sea." — *Stanley*.

14. The LORD shall fight for you. Those words shone out on the despairing multitudes "like the sun rising in calm majesty on the lost and almost spent traveller." — *Ebers*.



Breasted's "History of Egypt," C. Scribner's Sons.

Victorious Hymn of Merneptah.

Containing the earliest known reference to Israel.

15. Wherefore criest thou unto me? "Like the people (v. 10), Moses had cried to Jehovah, though he tells us of his cry only thus indirectly." — *Ellicott*. Go forward. "This command is the Christian watchword of duty and of safety in all ages. Go forward! Do your duty at whatever cost. The sea of troubles will open before you and show you a safe path through. Go forward is the watchword of progress for the world and of salvation for the soul. It climbs the dangerous steep, bridges the mighty stream, opens fountains in the desert, makes the wilderness blossom as the rose." — *March*.

17. I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians. "They had made themselves partakers in the monarch's guilt by mustering in hot haste when he summoned them, and had allowed themselves to revel in the anticipations of plunder and carnage (Ex. 15: 9). Under such circumstances, the general laws which govern human nature would be quite sufficient to make their hearts grow hard." — *Pulpit Commentary*.

18. The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD. News of the great overthrow would spread through the entire kingdom, and all would be obliged to recognize its supernatural character.

IV. The Miraculous Passage. — Vs. 19-22. The night came on. The first part was moonless, for it was at least three or four days after the full moon of the Passover. In the light of the pillar of fire, however, the Israelites moved forward in obedience to Moses. But that same light would disclose

19. And the angel of God, ¹ which went before the camp of Is'ra-el, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of ^{the} cloud ^{went removed} from before ^{their face,} ^{them,} and stood behind them:

20. And ^{and} it came between the camp of ^{the Egyptian} ^{Egypt} and the camp of Is'ra-el; and ² ^{there} was ^a ^{the} cloud and ^{the} darkness, ^{to them,} ^{but it gave light by night to these: so that yet gave it light by night: and} the one came not near the other all the night.

21. And Mo'ses ³ stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all ^{that} ^{the} night, and ⁴ made the sea dry ^{land,} ^{land,} and the waters were ⁵ divided.

22. And ⁶ the children of Is'ra-el went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ^{ground:} ^{ground:} and the waters ^{were} ^{were} ⁷ a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

¹ Ex. 13: 21; Num. 20: 16; Isa. 63: 9.

² Isa. 8: 14; 2 Cor. 4: 3.

³ V. 16.

⁴ Ps. 66: 6.

⁵ Ex. 15: 8; Josh. 3: 16; Ps. 74: 13; Isa. 63: 12.

⁶ V. 29; Ex. 15: 19; Num. 33: 8; Ps. 66: 6; Isa. 63: 13; 1 Cor. 10: 1.

⁷ Hab. 3: 10.

to the Egyptians the movements of the Hebrew host, and therefore the great cloud removed behind the Israelites, turning toward them its bright side, but interposing between them and their foes a barrier of impenetrable black, like the plague of darkness which they had recently experienced.

19. **The angel of God.** The real presence of Jehovah, of which the pillar of cloud and fire was only the outward manifestation. This removal of the cloud gave the Israelites all the night in which to cross the sea. "The distance to be traversed may not have been more than a mile, and the entire column may easily have accomplished the passage in five or six hours." — *Rawlinson*.

21. **The LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind.** "An east, or southeast, wind arose, and drove the upper water of the shallow bay towards the northwest, while probably a strong ebb-tide set in at the same time and drew the lower water southwards, so that the bed of the sea was for a considerable space laid bare." — *Rawlinson*. "This was soon after the full moon of the vernal equinox, when there would be a very low ebb and a very high flood. The tide rises from five to seven feet opposite Suez, and from eight to nine feet when aided by strong winds, returning with unusual suddenness and power after the ebb." — *Newhall*. "M. de Lesseps mentioned to me the extraordinary effects of this kind which he had witnessed in such storms as occur only at intervals of fifteen or twenty years. He had seen the northern end of the sea in places blown almost dry, and again had seen the waters driven far over the land toward the Bitter Lakes." — *Pres. S. C. Barlett*. "It is God's usual method to make the most of natural causes, to make the supernatural begin only where the natural ends." — *Blaikie*. "The coming of the wind at once, in connection with the symbolical act of Moses, is as much a miracle as the immediate division of the waters, without the intervention of any secondary cause, would have been." — *W. M. Taylor*.

22. **The waters were a wall.** It is not meant that the waters rose in a perpendicular wall, "but that the waters served the purpose of a fortification, in preventing the Egyptians from attacking the people on one flank or the other." — *Johnson*. Yet the waters with their waves would give the appearance of a wall. "History has no scene more picturesque than this wild night march, in the roar of tempest, amid the flying foam." — *Expositor's Bible*. "Imagine that triumphal march: the excited children restrained from ejaculations of wonder by the perpetual hush of their parents; the almost uncontrollable excitement of the women as they found themselves suddenly saved from a fate worse than death; while the men followed or accompanied them, ashamed or confounded that they had ever mistrusted God or murmured against Moses." — *F. B. Meyer*. "They passed in that night from Africa to Asia. Behind the African hills lay the strange land of their exile and bondage. Before them stretched the level plains of the Arabian desert. From slaves they had become free; from an oppressed tribe they had become an independent nation. It is the earliest recorded instance of a great national emancipation." — *Stanley*.

V. **The Overthrow of the Egyptians.** — Vs. 23-31. "Let us never forget that God was as willing to save Pharaoh as he was to save Moses. But Pharaoh would not be saved." — *Louis Albert Banks, D. D.*

23. And the E-gyp'tians pursued, and went in after them ^{to} into the midst of the sea, ^{even} all Phā'raōh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.

24. And it came to pass ^{that} in the morning watch, ¹ ^{the LORD looked unto} that the LORD looked forth upon the host of the E-gyp'tians through the pillar of fire and of ^{the} cloud, and ^{troubled} ^{discomfited} the host of the E-gyp'tians:

25. And ^{he} took off their chariot wheels, ^a that they drave them heavily: so that the E-gyp'tians said, Let us flee from the face of Is'ra-el; for the LORD ² fighteth for them against the E-gyp'tians.

26. And the LORD said untō Mō'ses, ³ Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the E-gyp'tians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.

¹ Psa. 77 : 17.

² V. 14.

³ V. 16.

a Or, and made them to drive heavily.



The King Charging on His Chariot.

In the time of Ramses II.

From the temple of Beêt-Wally
in Nubia.

23. The Egyptians pursued. Without doubt they were unaware that they were in the midst of the sea, for it was night, and they were surrounded by a fog. All Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. The horsemen were probably the charioteers, as the Egyptians of the time are not known to have employed cavalry. Note that it is not said

that Pharaoh himself was drowned, and he must have escaped, or, at least, his body was recovered, for his mummy has recently been found at Thebes, — if, indeed, this Pharaoh was Menephtah.

24. In the morning watch. "At a natural time for atmospheric changes, but in obedience to the rod of Moses, the furious wind veered or fell." — *Expositor's Bible*. "The morning watch of the Hebrews, at this period of their history, lasted from 2 A. M. to sunrise. Sunrise in Egypt, early in April, would take place about a quarter to six." — *Rawlinson*. The LORD looked unto. R. v., "looked forth upon." "Showers of rain came down from the sky, and dreadful thunders and lightning, with flashes of fire; thunderbolts were also darted upon them; nor was there anything wont to be sent by God upon men as indications of his wrath, which did not happen upon this occasion." — *Josephus*.

25. Took off their chariot wheels. "The wheels ran off the axles, so that the body of the chariot dragged upon the ground." — *Prof. W. H. Green*. "It was probably the deep sand of the treacherous gulf that did it, swallowing up the wheels, or clogging them, or even wrenching them off entirely." — *Todd*. "The chariot horses break the ranks and dash against each other in wild confusion. Wheels are entangled with wheels and torn off, while the frantic steeds drag the scythe-armed axles over dismounted charioteers and trample prostrate footmen alive into the mire." — *March*.

26. Stretch out thine hand. Thus showing that the power was from God, though probably natural means were still employed, — the returning tide and a changed wind, "the southwest wind blowing wildly from the clefts and gorges of the Attāka hills, the wind most dreaded by the boatmen of Suez." — *Geikie*.

27. And Mō'ses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea ¹ returned to ^{his} strength when the morning appeared; and the E-gyp'tians fled against it; and the LORD ^{2a} overthrew the E-gyp'tians in the midst of the sea.

¹ Josh. 4: 18.² Ex. 15: 1, 7.^a Hebrew, *shook off*.

27. The LORD overthrew the Egyptians. "Probably the struggle to escape did not occupy half an hour. Later in the day a ghastly mass of floating corpses was cast upon the Asiatic coast." — *Rawlinson*. "At this day a significant blank in the hieroglyphed memorials of Egypt tells the story of that overwhelming disaster." — *F. B. Meyer*. Just as in the list of Napoleon's great battles surrounding his tomb no mention is made of Waterloo, though it is the best-known battle he ever fought.

"So, the mighty drama is accomplished. The name of one God, and only one, has been celebrated by mighty acts and wonderful judgments. The obstinacy of despotism has been beaten down. Emancipation has been declared, and is on the way toward realization." — *Henry Ward Beecher*. "History was born on that night when Moses with the law of God in his heart led the people of Israel out of Egypt." — *Bunsen*. "This overwhelming moment created the people of Israel; they never forgot it." — *Professor Cornill*.

ILLUSTRATIONS. Browning's poem, "Instans Tyrannus." The tyrant has expected to crush some insignificant man as a mere insect. Suddenly the whole sky became his defence.

"Just my vengeance complete,
The man sprang to his feet,
Stood erect, caught at God's skirts, and prayed!
— So, I was afraid!"

"Jehovah had put the tears of the slaves into his bottle; and when the hour of doom rung out, for each of these diamond drops there was a victim." — *W. M. Taylor*.

"God liveth yet; and often he
Hath traced the path of history
Through many a deep and dark Red Sea.

"The foes of God and foes of man
He dooms by his almighty plan,
And leads himself his loyal van,"
— *Dwight Williams*.

"Every great nation has some favorite exploit in its past history. In Scottish history, the battle of Bannockburn, the struggles of the Reformers, the martyrdoms of the Covenanters; in English, the destruction of the Spanish Armada; the siege of Derry in Irish; the struggle of the seven provinces in the Netherlands against the tyranny of Philip; the feats of William Tell in Switzerland; the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers on Plymouth Rock, — all belong to the same category of immortal deeds. To this category, but excelling all of these in grandeur and glory, belongs the passage of the Red Sea." — *Blaikie*.

VI. The Songs of Thanksgiving. — Ex. 15: 1-21. "On the Arabian shore of the Red Sea, Moses and the sons of Israel met Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, at the head of the long train of Israelite women, with the sounding timbrels and the religious dances which they had learned in Egypt, coming forth as was the wont of Hebrew women after some great victory, to greet the triumphant host." In Moses' song and Miriam's response "the nation found its voice in the first Hebrew melody, in the first burst of national poetry, which still lives on through Handel's music." — *Stanley*. It is "the pattern Thanksgiving Hymn for the Church of God through all ages." — *Rawlinson*. "Who is conscious of an intellectual fall from the perusal of Milton to the perusal of this song of Moses?" — *Joseph Parker*. "It is unquestionably archaic. The parallelism of Hebrew verse is already here, but the structure is more free and unartificial than that of later poetry; and many ancient words, and words of Egyptian derivation, authenticate its origin." — *Expositor's Bible*.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

This lesson furnishes one of the most conspicuous illustrations in all history of the way in which God protects his people. In lesser ways, but just as effectively, he is protecting his people all the time.

1. We have no miraculous pillar of cloud and fire to guide us, but we have none the less the actual presence of God which was back of the cloud and fire.

"So where he leads me I can safely go,
And in the blest hereafter I shall know
Why in his wisdom he hath led me so."

2. Often God's guidance brings Christians into positions of great difficulty, from which they see no escape. But such a position "is a platform for the display of God's almighty grace and power." — *F. B. Meyer*. "When God leads us into danger, he will take us safely through it." — *W. M. Taylor*.

3. The appearance of the Egyptian army at the Red Sea was like the testing time that often comes to the Christian, "when the old enemy, out of whose bondage we seemed to have been delivered, pursues and overtakes, and tries to bring us into his power again. But if the Lord be with us we need not fear." — *Gibson*. With every temptation he will make a way to escape.

4. Dr. Robert South, who preached a century and a half ago, spoke of the seasonableness of the Israelites' deliverance. "God delivered them at that very nick of time, when they were but one remove, one hair's-breadth from destruction." But God's providences are never late. However impatient we may get, they always arrive on time.

5. Finally, after God has protected us in danger and delivered us from peril, we should praise him and thank him as the Hebrews did at the Red Sea. We should be eager to tell every one what he has done for us, and we should go singing through life in such a whole-hearted way that in heaven we shall not be ashamed to join in "the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb."

LESSON XII. — June 23.

REVIEW.

READ *Psa. 106 : 1-12.*

GOLDEN TEXT. — *When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.* — *ISA. 43 : 2.*

Several forms of review are described, that the teacher may select the method best adapted to the age and ability of his class. Sometimes, too, it will be an advantage to combine two different modes of review. Whatever plan is chosen, the teacher should announce it at least one week in advance, that there may be full preparation.

I. A MAP REVIEW.

Use a map which includes Palestine, Egypt, and Mesopotamia. If you have none, copy one from a teacher's Bible, in rough outline, on a large sheet of paper or a black-board. Provide circles of cardboard marked "Ja," "Jo," and "Mo." Get the class to pin these upon the places where Jacob, Joseph, and Moses lived or visited. For Jacob these will be successively Beersheba, Bethel, Haran, Penuel, Hebron; for Joseph, Hebron, Dothan, Tanis or Heliopolis; for Moses, Memphis or Tanis, Heliopolis, the land of Midian, Horeb, Memphis again, the land of Goshen, Etham, the Red Sea. The scholars will take turns fastening on these circles, and as each is put in place something will be told about the event that occurred at that locality. When the class are able to place these circles correctly, removing them and replacing them several times, then take strings, a different color for each of the three characters, and get the scholars to stretch them from one pin to another, to represent the journeys taken by each. Finally, point to the different circles at haphazard, asking the scholars what occurred at the various places.

II. THE THREE HEROES REVIEW.

Each scholar will be asked, a week in advance, to choose one of the three heroes of the quarter's lessons, — Jacob, Joseph, or Moses, — and prepare a five-minute or three-minute

essay upon him, to be read the next Sunday. The teacher, of course, will see to it that each hero is treated in about the same number of essays.

III. A TRIANGULAR DEBATE.

Propose to the class for debate the question, "Which was the greatest man, Jacob, Joseph, or Moses?" Appoint leaders for the three sides, and let them choose their followers, till all the class are ranged on sides. In the debate each is to be allowed one speech, when the question will be thrown open for general discussion, with closing speeches by the three leaders. Obtain judges from outside the class, if you can. Otherwise, the class will itself vote (as impartially as possible!) on which side made the best argument. If you do not enjoy a separate class-room, it will be well, after the opening exercises, to adjourn for the debate to some private house near by.

IV. THE FOUR COUNTRIES REVIEW.

Divide the class into groups, each group to study together for this review. There will be four groups, each to study one of the four countries which our quarter's lessons have entered, — Canaan, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the land of Midian. Each group will be prepared to tell what events of the quarter occurred in its country, and of how that country influenced the progress of the Hebrew history by its religion, its customs, its natural characteristics, and in other ways.

V. THE HIDDEN THOUGHT REVIEW.

This form of review is especially adapted to primary classes. The teacher will say, "I'm thinking about some person of whom we have studied this quarter; who is it?" The scholars are to try to discover by questions who it is. Of course the questions must not be direct, such as "Is it Jacob?" but indirect, as, "Is it the man who led the Israelites across the Red Sea?" After the person has been discovered the teacher will ask, "Now, what is he doing?" The scholars must now name the things he did in these lessons until they come across the deed of which the teacher is thinking. At the close of the hour the teacher will give an outline of the lessons of the quarter, pausing frequently for the scholars to fill in gaps; thus: "There was once a young man who had to leave his father's house because of a wrong he had done. His name was....., and his father's name was..... The wrong he had done was..... Setting out on his travels, he stopped for the night at a place called.....," etc.

VI. THE LARGE PROBLEMS REVIEW.

This form of review is best adapted to adult classes. It will consist of a series of essays or talks on the following topics: Steps in the development of the Hebrews as a nation. Steps in the development of the Hebrews' knowledge of God. How these lessons illustrate God's overruling of the mistakes and sins of men. Proofs of the authenticity of these narratives. Lessons of the quarter's study for modern times. Chief lessons of the quarter for the individual Christian. Some of these topics may best be treated by a general discussion, to be led by the member of the class appointed for that purpose.

VII. A CHART REVIEW.

Explain to the class the plan of the following outline of the quarter's lessons, but without showing it to them. Merely give them the five headings, and a sample lesson. Each will go over the lessons and construct his own chart at home. In the class these charts will be compared, and from them all a model chart will be constructed, something like this: —

LESSONS.		PERSONS.	PLACES.	TIME.	TEACHINGS.	PROGRESS OF EVENTS.
I.	J A	Isaac Rebekah Esau Angels Jehovah	Beersheba Bethel	Jacob 57 years old	God's presence and protection	The covenant renewed
II.	C O B	Rachel Leah Laban The angel Esau	Haran Penuel Hebron	20 or 40 years in Haran	How to get God's blessing	Jacob becomes Israel
III.	J O	Isaac Jacob Judah Reuben, etc. Ishmaelites	Hebron Shechem Dothan	Joseph 17 years old	The evil of envy	Israelites in contact with Egypt
IV.	S	Potiphar Potiphar's wife Chief butler Chief baker	Tanis or Heliopolis	13 years	The strength of purity and fidelity	Joseph on the way to influence
V.	E P	Pharaoh (Hyksos) Chief butler Asenath	Tanis or Heliopolis	7 years of plenty 2 years of famine	Wisdom brings power	Joseph preserves Egypt
VI.	H	Pharaoh Jacob The brothers	Tanis or Heliopolis Land of Goshen	Joseph 39 years old	The joy of forgiveness	The Israelites go to Egypt
VII.		Israelites Overseers Rameses II.	Goshen Pithom Raamses	215 or 430 years	Gains from affliction	Israelites increase to two millions
VIII.	M O	Amram Jochebed Miriam Pharaoh's daughter	Memphis or Tanis	Moses' first 40 years	Preservation Patriotism Patience	The rise of a great leader
IX.	S	Jehovah Jethro Aaron The elders Menephtah	Land of Midian Mt. Horeb	Moses' second 40 years	The call of duty	First steps in the exodus
X.	E	Jehovah Aaron Menephtah Magicians Israelites	Zoan or Memphis All Egypt	9 or 10 months	Doom of evil Deliverance of God's people	Israel obtains release from bondage
XI.	S	Jehovah Menephtah Israelites Miriam	Goshen Etham Red Sea	About one week	Doom of evil Deliverance of God's people	Israel's escape from Egypt

LESSON XIII. — June 30.

TEMPERANCE LESSON. — I Corinthians 10: 23-33.

COMMIT v. 31. READ the chapter.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth.* — ROM. 14: 21.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. To get a good view of the Bible attitude on temperance, read the following passages: Temperance and power: I Cor. 9: 25-27; Hos. 4: 11; I Pet. 1: 13.

2. Temperance and honor: Prov. 31: 4, 5; I Tim. 3: 2, 3, 8; Tit. 2: 2-4, 6.

3. Temperance and wisdom: Prov. 20: 1; Isa. 28: 7; Dan. 1: 3-21; Amos 6: 6.

4. Temperance and the future: I Cor. 6: 10; Matt. 24: 48-51; Luke 21: 34; Gal. 5: 21; I Thes. 5: 6; I Pet. 4: 7.

LEARN BY HEART.

V. 31; I Cor. 8: 13; 6: 10.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Primary Department. — The teacher may impress this lesson upon the scholars by reading to them some short temperance story. It will make an effective talk if the teacher traces the grain from the happy planting to the waving fields of harvest time; then follows its history, — the sale, the journey in cars, the rest in the elevator, then the horrible distillery, the whiskey bottle, the saloon, the drunkard, the murder the drinking leads to, the prison, the scaffold, the grave. A series of pictures may be gathered and set up before the class to emphasize the lesson.

Intermediate Department. — Each scholar may be asked to make a collection during the preceding week of the evil deeds recorded in the daily papers that are traced to drinking. These accounts are to be pasted together, and the scholars will see who has the longest roll of clippings. Each scholar may also be asked to write out and bring to the class a list of the reasons why every one should practise total abstinence. Read at the close of the lesson Dr. Power's indictment of the saloon.

Senior Department. — Five talks: (1) Statement of the problem that confronted Paul. (2) Paul's solution. (3) The similar problem of modern intemperance. (4) Application to it of Paul's principles. (5) Talk on some temperance matter of current or local interest. Discussion may follow each of these talks.

HYMNS OF THE AGES.

"Yield not to temptation." "Broad is the road that leads to death." "So let our lips and lives express."

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Foundation Principles of Temperance.

I. THE PROBLEM — BEFORE PAUL AND BEFORE US.

Should Christians eat meat offered to idols? The importance of the problem. Arguments for and against partaking of such meats. The parallel with the modern liquor problem.

II. FIRST ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM: FOLLOW GOOD EXAMPLES AND SHUN BAD ONES (I Cor. 10: 1-11).

Mistakes made by the Jews in their history. Striking examples in the matter of temperance.

III. SECOND ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM: TRUST GOD IN TIMES OF TEMPTATION (I Cor. 10: 12, 13).

A common temptation. A common offer of strength.

IV. THIRD ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM: HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH CHRIST (I Cor. 10: 14-22).

The Lord's Supper and heathen feasts. Christ in the heart, the cure for intemperance.

V. FOURTH ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM: TAKE UNSELFISH THOUGHT FOR OTHERS (vs. 23-30).

The principle of personal liberty. The contrasted principle of Christian brotherhood. How and when the second principle is to rule.

VI. FIFTH ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM: DO EVERYTHING TO GOD'S GLORY (vs. 31-33).

How this principle would put an end to saloons and drinking.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — Paul wrote this epistle, from Ephesus, about A. D. 57.

Place. — It was written to the Church at Corinth, one of the most worldly and luxurious cities of the time. Paul had lived and preached there for nearly two years (A. D. 52, 53), and knew the people well.

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Why the Christians of Paul's time might think it right to eat meat offered to idols.

Reasons why meat offered to idols should not be used.

Paul's solution of the question.

How the question of strong drink is like the question of meat offered to idols. How it is unlike.

How the principles Paul laid down apply to the use of strong drink.

Reasons for total abstinence.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

On Corinthians: *Expositor's Bible; Cambridge Bible; Expositor's Greek Testament; Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament; Speaker's Commentary, Pulpit Commentary*, commentaries by Ellicott, Lange, etc.

On Temperance: Among the most recent books are *The Saloon Problem and Social Reform*, by Professor Barker, of Boston University; *The Liquor Problem*, a summary of the investigations of the Committee of Fifty; *A Century of Drink Reform in the United States*, by August F. Fehandt; *The Lincoln Legion*, by Dr. Banks; *Who Killed Joe's Baby?* a powerful temperance story by Charles M. Sheldon.

I. The Problem — before Paul and before Us. — The new religion that Paul preached was, as was said of it, turning the world upside down. It introduced new tests of conduct and set up new and exacting standards of living. It banned as wrong, deeds that for centuries had been accepted as proper and even pious. It is no wonder, therefore, that Paul, writing in those disturbed times, was often obliged to discuss questions of conduct that perplexed the Christians themselves. Some of these were the matter of a rest day, whether they should observe the Jewish Saturday-Sabbath or the Christian Sunday or both; the matter of divorce; the question whether the Gentile converts should be required to become Jews. But the most generally perplexing question, at least for Christians living in Gentile cities like Corinth, was whether they should eat meat that had been offered to idols.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PROBLEM is hard for us to realize. In heathen sacrifices the fat of the animal, the entrails, and other less desirable parts were burned upon the altars, but the meat was eaten in honor of the gods by the worshipers themselves, or, if they were poor, it was sold by them in open market. The heathen priests, moreover, received much of the meat as their own perquisites, and this was for the most part sold in the public markets. Often, in such a city as Corinth, it was difficult to buy meat not thus tainted with idolatry. Besides, if a Christian "attended any of the social feasts, or wedding feasts of his heathen neighbors, or their public gatherings, he would almost of necessity partake of meat offered to idols, for only such was used. For the whole social life of the ancient world was closely interwoven with its religious worship. Sacrifices are enumerated by Aristotle and Thucydides amongst the chief means of social enjoyment. The feasts which take place amongst the lower orders in Spain, on the carcasses of the bulls killed in the great national bull-fights (*Fiesta dos Toros*), afford a good illustration of the practice." — *Stanley*. The question must have arisen in the most acute form of all when one or several members of a household were Christians, and the rest were heathen. The matter was so interwoven with daily life that it must have come up all the time. Paul discusses it at length in Romans 14, and his discussion in 1 Corinthians begins as far back as the eighth chapter. Much was to be said, *pro* and *con*.

ON THE ONE HAND, THEY SHOULD REFUSE TO PARTAKE OF SUCH MEATS, because (1) the practice had been forbidden by the decree of the council at Jerusalem seven years before (Acts 15: 29). (2) Because the act was peculiarly offensive to their Jewish brethren. (3) To use the flesh which had once been offered to a heathen divinity, "even in ordinary circumstances, would be an encouragement of the practice of sacrifice; much more to partake of the banquets which took place in the precincts of the temple itself, and on the scene of those licentious orgies with which the heathen worship was so often accompanied." — *Stanley*. (See 1 Cor. 8: 9-13.) (4) There was especial danger that the disciples themselves would be led not only into the ceremonial, but the moral pollutions connected with idolatry. (5) There was danger of leading into temptation those who were not strong in the faith, and of inducing them to act contrary to their consciences.

ON THE OTHER HAND, IT SEEMED RIGHT TO PARTAKE. (1) The decree at Jerusalem "given in Acts 15 was intended for special circumstances, and not for a universal rule. The letter containing it was addressed only to the churches of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia." — *Cambridge Bible*. (2) There was no essential wrong in eating such meat.

"An idol is nothing in the world." "If they abstained, they seemed to say that an idol was a real being, and so they gave a sanction to superstition." — *F. W. Robertson.* (3) The prohibition interfered with true Christian liberty, and such liberty is of the utmost importance to all. (4) The prohibition would cause a great deal of difficulty in obtaining meats for food. (5) Any unnecessary burdens on disciples hindered others from becoming Christians. (6) It compelled the disciples to keep away from almost all social and civil assemblies, and prevented them from influencing their heathen neighbors toward the gospel. (7) Such emphasis on matters not wrong in themselves would call attention away from real sins and crimes. It is always dangerous to lay as much emphasis on incidental things, as on the great truths and principles.

THE PARALLEL WITH THE MODERN LIQUOR PROBLEM is very close in all this. The evil of strong drink ramifies everywhere. There is scarcely a tradesman but may be called upon to work in the interests of the saloon. Newspapers with their advertisements, politicians with their laws, citizens with their votes, artists with their pictures, poets with their songs, farmers with their corn and rye, pharmacists with their drugs, and even confectioners with their candies, — almost every one is liable to become involved in the sin of the saloon. It touches, soon or late, every household. Here also, as in the matter of meat offered to idols, there is the fear of driving men from Christianity by appearing to be over-strict, censorious, and "cranky." How far shall a Christian go in conformity to the saloon, and to a society where strong drink is such a power? This is an important practical problem for every one, and in this chapter Paul lays down five principles that furnish a complete solution of it.

II. First Answer to the Problem: Follow Good Examples and Shun Bad Ones. — I Cor. 10: 1-11. "Paul reminds his readers of the awful lesson involved in the history of their fathers. They, by glorious privilege, had been guided by the fiery pillar, had been baptized in the parted sea, had quenched their thirst from the cloven rock, — yet all had been in vain. In spite of all, their hearts had lusted after evil things. Some had committed fornication and fallen in one day three and twenty thousand; some had tempted Christ and been destroyed of serpents; some had murmured and been destroyed of the destroyer. Oh, let them beware, for all this dark and splendid history was written for their example." — *Farrar.*

THE LESSON FOR US, as for the Corinthians, is very plain. Precept has been compared to "instruction written in the sand; the tide flows over it, and the record is gone. Example is graven on the rock, and the lesson is not soon lost." The Bible is full of silent warnings against drunkenness in the persons of drunkards, — Noah, Lot, Nabal, Elah, Ben-hadad, Ahasuerus, Belshazzar, Herod. We see how they failed miserably (all but Noah), and how their drunkenness caused or greatly contributed to their downfall.

In modern times the list may be sadly enlarged. Such names as Poe, Burns, and Lamb come at once to mind. "Successful thinkers are usually careful in their eating and drinking. Dickens and Bayard Taylor were not, but they died in the prime of life. Among those who were abstemious we may mention Sir Isaac Newton, A. T. Stewart, Jay Gould, Commodore Vanderbilt, Horace Greeley, Abraham Lincoln, Salmon P. Chase, Edward Everett, John C. Calhoun, Henry Ward Beecher, Humboldt, Longfellow, and Whittier. The last three did their best work in the evening of their lives." — *Health Culture.*

III. Second Answer to the Problem: Trust God in Time of Temptation. — I Cor. 10: 12, 13. Such examples of base yielding to temptation on the part of men whose opportunities were so splendid might prove depressing, and Paul turns from them to assure the Corinthians that, as temptation is common to all men, so victory over temptation in God's strength may be the happy experience of every man. It is the weak whom God succors.

"Being in straits, I cry,
'Lord, make a way!
Open a door for me;
Help me, I pray!'"
— *Anna Warner.*

"Oh, in that hero-multitude who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, think not that there are only the dauntless and the powerful, the great in heart and the strong in faith: no, there are many of the weak and the timid, many of the obscure and the ignorant. Yes! Jacob, once a mean trickster, and Aaron, once a weak apostate, is there; and Rahab the harlot, and David the adulterer; and Mary the weeping Magdalene, and Matthew the converted publican, and Dysmas the repentant thief." — *Farrar.*

"If you are in Christ, you are in the one under whose feet the devil is." — *F. B. Meyer.*

23. ¹ All things are lawful, ^{for me,} but all things are not expedient;
^{all} things are lawful, ^{for me,} but all things edify not.
 24. ² Let no man seek his own, but ^{every man another's wealth.}
^{each his neighbour's good.}
 25. ³ Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, ^{that} eat, asking no question for conscience sake;

1 Cor. 6: 12.

2 V. 33; Rom. 15: 1, 2; 1 Cor. 13: 5.

3 1 Tim. 4: 4.

IV. Third Answer to the Problem: Have Fellowship with Christ. — 1 Cor. 10: 14-22. "Give me a great thought," said the German poet, "that I may live on it." But better than a great thought is a great companionship. Therefore Paul next appeals to the Corinthians on the basis of the Lord's Supper, that great rite which their Saviour had left them, to signify their companionship with one another and with him. How incompatible with the Lord's Supper were the heathen feasts! In the one, quietness, peace, purity, and resulting strength. In the other, carousing, horrible licentiousness, followed by weakness of the body and ruin of the soul. How impossible was it to partake sincerely of the one and then resort to the other! No; Paul would remind his readers that their God was a jealous God, that they could not serve him and mammon.

THE TEACHING FOR US is one that underlies all successful warfare against the evil of strong drink. Between alcohol and the water of life there is an eternal repugnance. There are gold cures, and hypnotism cures, and drugs for poor wives to put secretly into their drunken husbands' coffee, and many other attempts at the conquest of the fearful appetite; but the only infallible cure is Christ in a man's heart.

ILLUSTRATION. "A hotel-keeper bought a piano, and his little daughter learned to play. One day the doors were open between the barroom and the parlor, and just as a young man came in and ordered a drink the girl began to play and sing 'Jesus, Lover of my soul.' He took up the glass, but he could not put it to his lips. Said he, 'My mother used to sing that song'; and he left the drink on the counter and went out." — *Julia Colman*. Let a man once get that song in his soul, and it will bring everything else into harmony with it.

V. Fourth Answer to the Problem: Take Unselfish Thought for Others. — Vs. 23-30. Paul sees in this matter two contrasting principles. Both are to be recognized and observed, but they are far from being of equal importance.

FIRST PRINCIPLE: PERSONAL LIBERTY. 23. All things are lawful for me. "This seems to have been a sort of watchword or motto used by the Pauline party in Corinth." — *Speaker's Commentary*. Of course Paul does not mean that it is lawful for him to do anything that is wrong, but that the Christian has a right to a free, joyful life, "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8: 21), "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" (Gal. 5: 1). God means all good things for his children, — social pleasures, healthy food and drink, happy family life, amusements, beauty, delights of the sense as well as the soul. Meats, in themselves, come under this head. Eaten by a Christian, they would become a Christian, and strengthen him in Christian work. "Whatever a lion eats becomes a lion."

SECOND PRINCIPLE: CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD. But all things edify not. American version, "Not all things edify." To edify is to build up character, and that is the great end of Christianity. Some things that are quite right in themselves, taken impersonally, become quite wrong when taken personally, in connection with others. This is because of the great differences in character and attainments. A matter that is no temptation to me, may be a deadly temptation to another man. It is this *other man* that we are to consider, if we are disciples of Him who "pleased not himself."

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE IS TO RULE, when the two conflict. 24. Let no man seek his own good; that is, seek it in a selfish way, without considering also the good of others. But every man another's wealth. "Wealth is used in the older English sense of *well-being*," — *Professor Vincent*. This is the nub of the whole matter. All that follows is merely comment upon it. We not only have liberty to eat, we have also liberty to abstain from eating; and in exercising the latter liberty out of deference to another's scruples or regard for his danger, we are doing the Christ-like thing, we are losing our lives that we may find them.

THE APPLICATION of these principles to the case under consideration was easy. 25. Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, the meat market, they are to eat, asking no

26. For ¹ the earth ^{is} the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

27. If ^{any} ^{one} of them that believe not ^{bid} ^{deth} you ^{to} a feast, and ye ^{be} ^{are} disposed to go; ² whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

28. But if any man say unto you, This ^{is} ^{hath} ^{been} offered in sacrifice, unto idols, eat not ³ for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for ⁴ the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

29. Conscience, I say, not thine own, but ^{of} the ^{other:} ^{other's;} for ⁵ why is my liberty judged ^{of} ^{by} another ^{man's} conscience?

30. For if I ^{by} ^a grace ^{be} ^a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that ⁶ for which I give thanks?

¹ V. 28; Ex. 19: 5.

² Luke 10: 7.

³ I Cor. 8: 10, 12.

⁴ V. 26; Psa. 24: 1.

⁵ Rom. 14: 16.

⁶ Rom. 14: 6; I Tim. 4: 3, 4.

a Or, thanksgiving.

question as to its origin, whether it came from a temple or not. That can make no real difference, since (v. 26 — quoted from Psa. 24: 1) **the earth is the Lord's**, and cannot be alienated from him though offered to a thousand idols; and everything that is God's belongs to God's children, to whom he "has given all things richly to enjoy." This, as to their private meals, where no one is near to be influenced; but the same principle holds for a heathen feast. There, also (v. 27), **whatsoever is set before** them they are to **eat, asking no question for conscience sake**, their conscience not being troubled about the matter. But if some one, as a test, perhaps sneeringly or mockingly, calls their attention to the fact that they are eating meat that has been offered to idols, then everything is different. Then they are no longer merely eating meat, but they are setting an example of eating meat offered to idols, which is contrary to the conscience of some of the guests, or may be misinterpreted by the heathen themselves as implying that idols are not so very bad after all. "Your conscience is unchanged," Paul is careful to add, "but you are abstaining out of regard to the consciences of others." At the same time (vs. 29, 30), Paul inserts a side warning against uncharitable judgments, and forbids Christians to villify a brother even if he is seen eating idolatrous meat, if he does it in good conscience. They may instruct, but not condemn.

"PERSONAL LIBERTY" is a watchword of those that advocate and defend the saloon. "If I want to take a drink now and then," they ask, "and believe it good for my health, or at any rate not injurious, why shouldn't I have the privilege? And why should I be barred from the privilege just because others abuse it?" This argument has much force with many who have not caught the Christian spirit.

Of course, one might bring up the undoubted facts of physiology proving that alcohol is injurious to health. Summing up the conclusions of the Committee of Fifty, Dr. J. S. Billings says: "In all occupations where keen senses, sharp attention, or great concentration of the mind are called for, alcohol in any form or amount is injurious when taken during the performance of duty in hand. . . . Alcohol gives no persistent increase of muscular power. It is well understood by all who control large bodies of men engaged in physical labor that alcohol and effective work are incompatible." And no one has a right to injure his own health: it is an injury to those dear to him and dependent on him, and an injury also to society.

But Paul takes still higher ground in his answer to the argument of "personal liberty." We are our brothers' keepers. The law of liberty is the law of love. Imitating Paul (I Cor. 8: 13) we may well say, "If drinking alcoholic beverages makes my brother to stumble — as it most plainly does — I will drink them no more while the world stands."

ILLUSTRATION. "As the Arctic voyager who has been frozen up all winter does not seize the first opportunity to escape, but waits till his weaker companions gain strength enough to accompany him, so must the Christian accommodate himself to the weaknesses of others." — *Expositor's Bible*.

"Said the Man to the Saloon-Keeper, 'Your pestilent decoy
Is capturing and maddening and ruining my boy.'
And the Rummy answered, 'Personal liberty!'"

31. ¹ Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

32. ² Give ^{none offence, neither} ^{no occasion of stumbling, either} to the Jews, ^{nor} or to ^{the Gen'tiles, nor} the Greeks, or to ³ the church of God:

33. ^{Even} as ⁴ I ^{also} please all ^{men} men in all ^{things,} things, ⁵ not seeking mine own profit, but the *profit* of the many, that they may be saved.

¹ Col. 3: 17.

² Rom. 14: 13; 1 Cor. 8: 13;

2 Cor. 6: 3.

³ Acts 20: 28; 1 Cor. 11: 22.

⁴ Rom. 15: 2; 1 Cor. 9: 19, 22.

⁵ V. 24.

"Said the Man to the Saloon-Keeper, 'I'll exercise right soon
My "personal liberty" to shut your vile saloon.'

And the Rummy answered, 'Personal — fiddlesticks!'"

— *Amos R. Wells.*

VI. Fifth Answer to the Problem: Do Everything to God's Glory. — Vs. 31-33. 31. **Whatsoever ye do.** Eating and drinking are mentioned merely because Paul had been talking about them; the principle he lays down here applies to all life. "The modern idea of some acts being religious and some secular is neither here nor elsewhere recognized by St. Paul." — *Ellicott*. **Do all to the glory of God.** Not for your own glory, or your own sensual gratification, or even to please your friends.

32. How may we know whether a certain action is to the glory of God? Paul gives a test: that it should "give no occasion of stumbling" (R. v.) to any one, **Jews . . . Gentiles,** or Christians.

33. But the best of precepts are dead without an example, and Paul dares to set before the Corinthians the example of himself. He will not tell them to do anything that he is not trying to do. But his example is of value only as it leads up to the great example of Christ, of whom he is a follower, and to whom he points them in the next verse (1 Cor. 11: 1), which is really the conclusion of this chapter, and is so printed in the R. v.

THIS PRINCIPLE, of doing everything to the glory of God, would put a speedy end to the sale and the use of intoxicants. Could any one run a saloon to the glory of God? Could any one get drunk to God's glory, or even, to God's glory, tittle a little, and thus put a temptation in the way of the young or of the drunkard who is trying to reform? It is impossible to conceive such a thing. Nothing on earth is more hostile to the glory of God than the saloon.

A TERRIBLE AND TRUE INDICTMENT.

"The saloon is the enemy of God. Its forces are against the forces that make for righteousness; it makes a brute of the being God created in his own image and likeness; its very atmosphere reeks with blasphemy; it destroys all faith, all virtue, all love toward God, reverence for God, likeness to God; it is the organized expression of the kingdom of Satan among men.

"It is the enemy of man. It bloats his visage, corrupts his heart, weakens his will, sears his conscience, makes a common sewer of the body intended to be the temple of God's Spirit, sends an immortal soul reeling into outer darkness.

"It is the enemy of the home. It puts out the fire, empties the larder, turns the protector of the family into a thing of terror and abhorrence, clothes the wife in rags, and brings the children to suffering and shame.

"It is the enemy of the state. It is the breeding-place of all plots and conspiracies that threaten the downfall of society. It is the Gibraltar of bad politics, the gathering-place of thugs and repeaters, the market of the purchasable vote, the fountainhead of municipal wrong-doing.

"It is the enemy of the church. Beside every sanctuary the devil would open his pit. It builds up a barrier between the soul and Christ, fills men with hatred toward everything lovely and of good report, bars the way to the sanctuary, and laughs at the thought of God and eternity.

"For it, is the devil; against it, God. For it, vice; against it, virtue. For it, the brothel; against it, the home. For it, falsehood; against it, truth. For it, the anarchist; against it, the statesman. For it, poverty; against it, plenty. For it, misery; against it, happiness. For it, disease; against it, health. For it, death; against it, life. For it, hell; against it, heaven." — *Rev. Frederick D. Power, LL.D.*



NUKB HAWÁ.
"Pass of the Winds," near Sinai.

THIRD QUARTER,

JULY 7 TO SEPT. 29, 1907.

FROM THE EXODUS TO THE DEATH OF MOSES.

Lessons in the Wilderness Training School.

LESSON I.—July 7.

GOD FEEDS ISRAEL IN THE WILDERNESS.

Exodus 16: 1-15.

READ Ex. 15: 22—18: 27. COMMIT v. 4.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*I am the living bread which came down from heaven.*

JOHN 6: 51.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Compare the whole chapter with the parallel passages.—Num. 11: 4-35; Psal. 78: 19-31; Deut. 8: 2-16; Josh. 5: 12; Neh. 9: 20; Heb. 9: 4; Rev. 2: 17, and decide what they add to our understanding of this lesson.

Make a study of Christ's miracle of the loaves and his teaching from it, and his use, by contrast, of the giving of the manna (John 6).

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

A new interest will be given to these lessons if we compare the history of the Israelites in the wilderness to Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, which is a picture of the Christian life from its first awakening in childhood to its close. Life is a school. And as in life we are learning many lessons, so the Israelites were learning many needed lessons in their forty years' schooling in the wilderness. Their experience and God's dealings with them teach us as by object-lessons the very things we need to learn. Each week we have brought before us something most important for us to know for our life's journey.

LITERARY REFERENCES.

"The Hunger and Thirst of the Wilderness," a chapter in Mrs. Whitney's *The Open Mystery*. H. Bonar's "Marah and Elim." Mrs. Heman's "The Fountain of Marah." Keble's "Song of the Manna Gatherers." Mrs. Cecil Frances Alexander's "The Manna in the Wilderness."

LEARN BY HEART.

Psa. 78: 22-25; John 6: 51-58; Deut. 8: 2, 3.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Daily Bread in the Wilderness of Life.

I. THE BEGINNING OF THE LONG JOURNEY TO THE PROMISED LAND.

The needful discipline.

II. TWO INCIDENTS IN THE TRAINING PROCESS (Ex. 15: 22-27).

The bitter waters of Marah.

The wells and palm trees of Elim.

III. THE DISCIPLINE OF DAILY BREAD (vs. 1-15).

1. The hunger in the wilderness (vs. 1-3).
2. The discipline of faith from the promise of daily bread (vs. 4-6).
3. The schooling in faith from the manifest presence of God (vs. 7-10).
4. Schooling by the gift of earthly food (vs. 11-13).
5. Schooling by the gift of the manna (vs. 12-15).

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Expositor's Bible, on Exodus, by Preben-dary Chadwick. *The International Critical Com.* on Exodus is not out at this writing, but may be in time for teachers. Ellicott's *Handy Com.* Professor Bush's *Notes*. Pro-fessor Murphy's *Commentary*. *Pulpit Bible*. Cook's *Bible Commentary*. The history as given in Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy is rearranged in Kent's *Beginnings of Hebrew History*. The most probable route of the exodus is given in H. C. Trumbull's scholarly *Kadesh-barnea*. Wm. M. Taylor's *Moses the Lawgiver*, the chapter on "Marah, Elim, and Sin." Stanley's *Jewish Church*, Vol. I.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Break thou the bread of life."
 "Day by day the manna fell."
 "Travelling to the better land."

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DE-
CIDING PRACTICAL
QUESTIONS.

Murmur not, but trust the Lord for every daily need.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. According to the common chrono-logy the crossing of the Red Sea was about the first of April, B. C. 1491. Pro-fessor Beecher regards this early date as probably the correct one, "near the begin-ning of the 15th century, B. C."

Many scholars regard the date as about 1300 B. C., and some as late as 1200 B. C. There is great uncertainty as to the exact time.

This lesson belongs about a month after the last regular lesson.

Place. The northern part of the Wilder-ness of Sin, a long plain bordering the Gulf of Suez on the east. See the map.

CHRONOLOGICAL CHIMES.

In Egypt, Thothmes III., 1501-1447 B. C., or Ramses II., 1292-1225. After Ramses II. there was a decline in Egypt's power.

The Tell-el-Amarna letters between Egypt and the kings of Palestine, Babylonia, and Nineveh, in the reigns of Amenhotep III. and IV., 1411-1358 B. C. Discovered in 1885 A. D. In Babylonia, the third dynasty, the Kassites, B. C. 1780-1207 (see Rogers' *Hist.* I. 340, 341).

I. The Beginning of the Long Journey to the Promised Land. — Six hundred thousand men, besides children and a mixed multitude, had escaped from Egypt and its slavery, crossed the Red Sea, and were now beginning their journey to Palestine. It took them forty years, although it could as easily have been accomplished in forty weeks. The reason is given in Deut. 8: 2, 3:



From a Photograph by Wilson.

Wells of Moses.

The place where the Israelites first encamped. There is a small spring of brackish water at the foot of the palm tree.

"And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.

"And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live."

They were weakened morally by their long slavery. They were unfitted to enter the Promised Land. They could not have conquered it, undisciplined as they were. They were as children going to school to be prepared for their life work.

They were like Bunyan's Christian just starting from the City of Destruction, with the burden of his sins on his back. Three routes were possible (see map). (1) The Philistia road, the northern road, around the Mediterranean. This they avoided, because it would lead them through the warlike tribe of Philistines. (2) The "Way of Shur," directly east. They rejected this, because it traversed the worst of the desert. (3) Therefore they were guided to take the lower road running southeasterly along the eastern shore of the Red Sea.

II. Two Incidents in the Training Process.—EX. 15: 22-27. **FIRST. THE BITTER WATERS OF MARAH.** For three days they marched slowly about ten miles a day through an almost waterless desert. Then they approached the waters of Marah, with exultant joy, only to find them too bitter to drink, and their disappointment was more bitter than the water. "And if Marah," says Chadwick, "be indeed Huwara, as seems to be agreed, the waters are still the worst in all the district."

They murmured against Moses; in unbelief. They remind us of Pliable in the Slough of Despond, saying to Christian, "Is this the happiness ye have told me all this while of?"

Moses cried unto the Lord; in faith. In answer to his prayer the Lord showed him a tree, which he cast into the waters, and the waters became sweet.

THIS DISCIPLINE is full of instruction for us as for them.

1. After some high experience, after songs of victory, after a flight into the highest joys, like Peter and John on the Mount of Transfiguration, there is apt to come some period of disillusion, a descent into the trials and duties of daily life. Even after revivals come the battles with evil and the burdens of common duties. "Affection itself has a dangerous moment, when two united lives begin to realize that even their union cannot banish aches and anxieties, weariness and business cares."

2. But this experience was for their best good. They learned the lesson of trust. And more, he made them a new promise that they should be exempt from the foul diseases prevalent among the Egyptians (see Deut. 28: 27, 60). "It is a significant fact that at this day, after eighteen hundred years of oppression, hardship, and persecution, of the ghetto and the old-clothes trade, the Hebrew race is proverbially exempt from repulsive and contagious disease." God sweetens the waters, and makes the discipline work out for us deliverance from the evils of sin.

"Travelling to the better land,
O'er the desert's scorching sand,
Father! let me grasp thy hand,
Lead me on, lead me on."

"When at Marah, parched with heat,
I the sparkling fountain greet,
Make the bitter water sweet,
Lead me on, lead me on."

"Shall we say with the fathers that the tree cast into the waters represents the cross of Christ? At least it is a type of the sweetening and assuaging influences of religion—a new element, entering life, and as well fitted to combine with it as medicinal bark with water, making all wholesome and refreshing to the disappointed wayfarer, who found it so bitter hitherto."—Dean Chadwick.

4. In this sweetening of the water, we see the union of divine grace with human energy, as in all medicine, and in all spiritual growth (Phil. 2: 12, 13).

SECOND. THE PALM GROVES AND WELLS OF ELIM. "From Marah and its agitations there was a



From a Photograph by Wilson.

Wells of Elim.

Representing the twelve wells, the second station of the Israelites after crossing the Red Sea on their way to Sinai.

1. And they ¹ took their journey from E'lim, and all the congregation of the children of Is'ra-el came unto the wilderness of ² Sin, which ^{is} between E'lim and Si'nai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of E'gypt.

2. And the whole congregation of the children of Is'ra-el ³ murmured against Mō'ses and ^{against} Aar'on in the wilderness:

3. ^{And} the children of Is'ra-el said unto them, ⁴ Would ^{to God} that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of E'gypt, ⁵ when we sat by the flesh pots, ^{and} when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

4. Then said the LORD unto Mō'ses, Behold, I will rain ⁶ bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a ^{certain rate} day's portion every day, that I may ⁷ prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.

¹ Num. 33: 10.

² Ezek. 30: 15.

³ Ex. 15: 24; Psa. 106: 25; 1 Cor. 10: 10.

⁴ Lam. 4: 9.

⁵ Num. 11: 4, 5.

⁶ Psa. 78: 24; John 6: 31, 32.

⁷ Ex. 15: 25; Deut. 8: 2, 16.

journey of but a few hours to Elim, with its twelve fountains and seventy palm trees — a fair oasis, by which they encamped and rested, while their flocks spread far and wide over a grassy and luxuriant valley.

"The picture is still true to the Christian life, with the Palace Beautiful just beyond the lions, and the Delectable Mountains next after Doubting Castle." — *Dean Chadwick*.

Elim is the type of life's joy and rest and peace. When we come to Marah in our life journeys, let us cast into the bitter waters the tree of our faith, and remember that God has Elims ahead, waiting for us.

III. The Discipline of Daily Bread; Manna in the Wilderness. — FIRST. FROM HUNGER IN THE WILDERNESS. — Vs. 1-3.

1. **Journey from Elim**, where they enjoyed God's shepherding in the green pastures by the waters of rest. They continued their journey southward along the Red Sea coast till they came unto the wilderness of Sin, southeast of Elim, toward Sinai; but by which route the Israelites journeyed to Sinai is uncertain, and, therefore, the exact place of the wilderness is unknown. **Fifteenth day of the second month**, early in May, just one month after they started from Egypt.

2. **Murmured against Moses**, but really against God who had guided Moses.

3. **Would to God we had died . . . in the land of Egypt**, like the firstborn of the Egyptians. The contrast as to fertility between the wilderness and Egypt was very great. But they forgot their sufferings from slavery there, and the wonderful deliverances from God. They did not appreciate their freedom, their spiritual training and privileges, and all that would lead to a higher life.

NOTE (1) that they might have been sure that God would provide them with food. Would he have done such wonders on the field of Zoan and at the Red Sea, if he meant them to die in the wilderness? They only needed to look up to God and on what he had done to strengthen their faith. They were like Christian in Doubting Castle, who forgot that he had in his bosom the key of deliverance.

ILLUSTRATION. "A friend of mine was once wandering in a thick fog. He could not see a step behind or before, and his soul was filled with gloomy thoughts. Of a sudden he looked upward, and lo! the sky was visible, full of stars. He was walking through a thick fog that reached only a few feet above his head. So in all our troubles; we have only to look up, and we can see God's kindness through them." — *Amos R. Wells*.

NOTE (2) God was only waiting till they had learned their lesson of faith. They put material comfort before spiritual life. God's way was to have them seek first the character which would prepare them for their Promised Land.

SECOND. DISCIPLINE OF FAITH FROM THE PROMISE OF DAILY BREAD. — Vs. 4-6.

4. **I will rain bread from heaven**. What the desert could not supply God promised from the stores of heaven. This promise would test their faith. **A certain rate**, "a day's portion," **every day**. Their bread was to be daily bread, with no stores of food in sight, teaching them to trust God continually, and training them to look constantly to him as the source of all they needed.

5. And it shall come to pass: ^{that} on the sixth day, ^{that} they shall prepare ^{that} which they bring in; and ^{that} it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.

6. And Mō'ses and Aar'on said unto all the children of Is'ra-el, ² At even, then ye shall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of E'gypt:

7. ^{And} in the morning, then ye shall see ³ the glory of the LORD; for that he heareth your murmurings against the LORD: and ⁴ what ^{are} we, that ye murmur against us?

8. And Mō'ses said, *This shall be*, when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the LORD heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what ^{are} we? your murmurings ^{are} not against us, but ⁵ against the LORD.

9. And Mō'ses ^{spake} unto Aar'on, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Is'ra-el, ^{said} Come near before the LORD: for he hath heard your murmurings.

10. And it came to pass, as Aar'on spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Is'ra-el, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the LORD ⁷ appeared in the cloud.

11. And the LORD spake unto Mō'ses, saying,

12. ⁸ I have heard the murmurings of the children of Is'ra-el: speak unto them, saying, ⁹ At even ye shall eat flesh, and ¹⁰ in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I ^{am} the LORD your God.

¹ V. 22; Lev. 25: 21.

² Vs. 12, 13; Ex. 6: 7; Num. 16: 28.

³ V. 10; Isa. 35: 2; John 11: 4, 40.

⁴ Num. 16: 11.

⁵ 1 Sam. 8: 7; Luke 10: 16; Rom. 13: 2.

⁶ Num. 16: 16.

⁷ V. 7; Ex. 13: 21; Num. 16: 19.

⁸ V. 8.

⁹ V. 6.

¹⁰ V. 7.

5. On the sixth day, etc. This was to teach them to keep the Sabbath through which they gained their religious training and their inspiration to trust and obey God.

THIRD. SCHOOLING IN FAITH FROM THE MANIFEST PRESENCE OF GOD.—Vs. 7-10.

7. Ye shall see the glory of the LORD. When God a few weeks later showed his glory to Moses, it was his goodness that passed before him (Ex. 33: 18, 19). In order that they might realize God's presence, his glory, his power, his glory appeared before them in the clouds, with a brightness that inspired awe (v. 10). It was hard for them to realize an unseen God. Compare the visible glory of God shown at the burning bush (Ex. 3: 2); on the Mount (Ex. 24: 10, 17; Ezek. 1: 26-28; John 1: 4, 5; Acts 9: 3, 4; Rev. 22: 5).

8. Your murmurings are not against us, but against the LORD. Moses was their leader, but God was *his* Leader. It was vastly worse to complain of God than of men. Therefore the answer, the gift of food, came clearly from God. Compare Ex. 34: 5, 6, 7.

HOW DOES MOSES' REBUKE FIT US? Our murmurings and failure to trust God arise, like the complaints of the Israelites, from our forgetfulness of the past. Let us not scorn the Israelites because they forgot the miracles before Pharaoh and at the Red Sea until we are sure we are not forgetting the blessings God has heaped upon us. The best argument for trust is gratitude.

"He who hath led will lead
All through the wilderness.

He who hath fed will feed;
He who hath blessed will bless."

FOURTH. SCHOOLING BY THE GIFT OF EARTHLY FOOD.—Vs. 11-13. 12. At even ye shall eat flesh, the flesh of (v. 13) quails which came up from the Arabian gulf of the Red Sea, "across which they fly in the spring in great numbers, and are often so fatigued after their passage, and fly so low, as to become an easy prey wherever they alight."

13. And it came to pass ^{that} at even, ^{that} ¹the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning ²the dew lay round about the ^{host} camp.

14. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness ^{there lay} ³a small round thing, ^{as} small as the hoar frost on the ground.

15. And when the children of Is'ra-el saw ^{it}, they said one to another, ^{It is manna:} ^{What is it?} for they wist not what it ^{was.} And Mō'ses said unto them, ⁴This ^{is} ^{It is} the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat.

¹ Num. 11: 31; Psa. 78: 27, 28.

² Num. 11: 9.

³ Num. 11: 7; Deut. 8: 3; Psa. 78: 24.

⁴ John 6: 31; 1 Cor. 10: 3.

— *Bush*. "I have myself found the ground in Algeria, in the month of April, covered with quails for an extent of many acres at daybreak, where on the preceding afternoon there had not been one." — *Tristram*. "The quails, as appears by the subsequent narrative, were supplied, not regularly, but only on rare occasions; in fact (so far as appears), only here in the wilderness of Sin, and at Kibroth-Hattaavah, in the wilderness of Paran (Num. 11: 31-34).

The gift of the quails came through natural means, like most of their food and ours. All our daily food is the gift of God, however much we may work for it ourselves. It forever points us to God and claims our thanks.

This kind of miracle, we believe, our Father is constantly working for his children. God has not made nature like a vast machine, and gone away and left it. He lives in all his works, — the sun, rain, wind, the very birds of the air, and continually uses nature to bless those who honor him.

"A strange pale gold, adorning
Many a tufted mountain side
Yearly feed us,
Year by year our murmurings chide."
— *Keble, Lyra Innocentium*.

"Back of the loaf is the snowy flour,
And back of the flour the mill;
And back of the mill is the wheat and the shower,
And the sun and the Father's will."
Maltbie D. Babcock, D. D.

FIFTH. SCHOOLING BY THE GIFT OF THE MANNA. — Vs. 12-15. Compare 2 Esd. 1: 12-20, where the manna is called "angels' food." 12. In the morning ye shall be filled with bread, the manna.

14. And when the dew that lay was gone up. They must wait for this, since the dew would render the manna difficult to gather. Behold, upon the face of the wilderness. Upon the ground, outside the camp. A small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. How simple and natural is this description of the miracle.

15. They said one to another, What is it? R. V. "Manna is said to owe its name to this question, 'Man hu?' 'What is it?'" — *Professor Macalister in Hastings' Bible Dictionary*.

WHAT WAS THE MANNA? It was (v. 31) "like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey." "The taste of it (Num. 11: 8) was as the taste of fresh oil." It was ground in mills, beaten in mortars, seethed in pots, and used to make cakes. It fell with the dew. In Psa. 78: 24, 25 it is called "the corn of heaven," "the bread of the mighty," and it sustained the Israelites through much toil, but it did not pamper their senses.

It was not the natural manna of the Arabian desert. There are several kinds of manna in the desert. One kind exudes in drops from the tamarisk tree and is a sweet semi-fluid substance. The manna of commerce is a sickly smelling, sweet, laxative



Quail.
Coturnix Communis.

exudation from the flowering ash. None of these could be the manna of Exodus. These only flow in small quantities, only at special seasons (May to September), are drugs and not food, are physiologically insufficient as food, can keep indefinitely, and could not be cooked. See *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*.

The manna was therefore miraculous, and for that reason was best adapted to train the Israelites to recognize God's presence and to trust in him, and is the best symbol, for all ages, of God's gift of spiritual food, and of Jesus as the bread of life.

IN BIBLICAL RESEARCH in the *Independent* for Feb. 26, 1891, occurs this statement:

"The director of the central dispensary at Bagdad has sent to *La Nature* a specimen of an edible substance which fell during an abundant shower in the neighborhood of Merdin and Diarbékir (Turkey in Asia) in August, 1890. The rain which accompanied the substance fell over a surface of about ten kilometers in circumference. The inhabitants collected the 'manna,' and made it into bread, which is said to have been very good and to have been easily digested. The specimen sent to *La Nature* is composed of small spherules; yellowish on the outside, it is white within. Botanists who have examined it say that it belongs to the family of lichens known as *Lecanora esculenta*."

FOOD FOR THE CATTLE. The following statement is given in a report of a sermon by a prominent minister. "Mr. Fronton and Mr. Sicard took the same route from Egypt toward Canaan that the Israelites took, and they give this as their testimony: 'With respect to forage, they would be at no loss. The ground is covered with tamarisk, broom, clover, and saint foin, of which latter especially camels are passionately fond, besides almost every variety of odoriferous plant and herb proper for pasturage.

"The whole sides of the valley through which the children of Israel marched are still tufted with brushwood, which doubtless afforded food for their beasts. Lastly, the herbage underneath these trees and shrubs is completely covered with snails of a prodigious size and of the best sort, and, however uninviting such a repast might appear to us, they are here esteemed a great delicacy.' These mollusks of the land would aid in sustaining the people."

Mrs. Lewis, who made the notable discoveries of ancient manuscripts in the convent on Mount Sinai, says on her return from her fourth visit there: "No doubt there was more vegetation in the peninsula in ancient times than there is now; but even at the present day there are more flocks of sheep and goats about than the sandy, stony character of the country would lead one to suppose."

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. THE SYMBOL OF THE TRUE BREAD FROM HEAVEN. It is impossible, now, to read this narrative without connecting it with the Saviour's discourse to the Jews (John 6: 27-58), and we should make the same use of it in teaching our scholars that Jesus did in teaching the Jews. We all are in the wilderness. We all need bread from heaven. Our souls all have hunger and thirst. No one truly lives whose body feeds but whose soul starves. And Jesus is the true Bread from heaven. This manna was designed, like the blazing serpent and the water from the rock in Rephidim, to prefigure and prophesy the coming of him in whom the wants of the soul would be as fully met as those of the body were by these well-known miracles.

2. THE BREAD OF LIFE. The soul needs food as really as the body. Every faculty of the soul needs its own food, that will strengthen and sustain its life, develop its powers, make it grow into the fulness and perfection of its nature. Whatever enlarges the soul, builds up the character, increases faith, hope, love, knowledge, and all the virtues, makes the conscience more tender and true, cultures the will, perfects the judgment, and enables the soul to work out a pure and holy life, and fits it for heaven, — whatever does these things is the bread of life. This is the ambrosia and nectar of divine delicacy and flavor, which the Greeks represented as the food and drink of their gods.

"A perpetual feast of nectared sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns." — Milton.

HOW IS JESUS THE BREAD OF LIFE? Not by eating his actual flesh, even if, as some suppose, the bread of the communion were changed into that. We in no way become what we eat. "What lion eats becomes lion." "Sheep eat grass, but it is wool that grows on their backs." We should be no better if we could actually eat the body of Christ. But whatever feeds our souls does make us better, and Jesus does this. He satisfies every hunger of the soul.

1. He brought life from heaven, and by his Holy Spirit inspires us with new life, so that we are born again into his heavenly kingdom.

2. He sustains life in us by his own personal power and love. Life imparts and cherishes life. It is agreed in the educational world that the greatest power of a teacher is the personal contact of his soul-life with the souls of his scholars, till they feel

"His being working in my own,
The footsteps of his life in mine."

Emerson says, "What you *are* speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you *say*." Every motive and power that can elevate our characters is found in Jesus and his cross.

3. LIKE THE MANNA GATHERERS, each one must gather for himself and eat for himself. We must go to Jesus, live in his presence, learn his words and practise them. We must take Jesus as our leader and friend and companion. "No nobler feeling," says Carlyle, "than admiration for one higher than himself dwells in the breast of man. It is to this hour, and at all hours, the vivifying influence in man's life."

"Some good man," says Cicero, "must be singled out and kept ever before our eyes, that we may live as if he were looking on, and do everything as if he could see it."

Compare the power over his life of Dr. A. J. Gordon's vision of Christ's presence in his church while he was preaching. See *How Christ Came to Church* (Baptist Publishing House).

4. Like the manna, our spiritual food must be our daily bread for daily needs. For it keeps us in close relations to our heavenly Father.

5. There is enough for all. Who gathers more than he needs of any of God's gifts must share them with those who have less.

"For the heart grows rich in giving;
All its wealth is living grain.
Seeds which mildew in the garner,
Scattered, fill with gold the plain."
— *Mrs. Charles.*

"Dig channels for the streams of Love
Where they may broadly run;
And Love has overflowing streams
To fill them every one."

"But if at any time thou cease
Such channels to provide,
The very springs of Love for thee
Will soon be parched and dried."

"For we must share, if we would keep,
That good thing from above;
Ceasing to give, we cease to have,
Such is the law of Love."
— *Trench.*

LESSON II. — July 14.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS — DUTIES TOWARD GOD. — Exodus 20: 1-11.

READ Ex. 19: 1 — 20: 11. COMMIT vs. 1-11.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.* — DEUT. 6: 5.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Compare the Ten Commandments with the Lord's Prayer, and note how the first table (1-4) corresponds with the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer, and the second table with the last three, the answer to deliver us from evil being found in keeping the second table.

Compare the commandments here with the account in Deut. 5: 7-21.

Note the urgency of obedience: Deut. 6: 1-15; 28; 29; 30.

Note the use of this urgency in the words the Jews put in their phylacteries: Ex. 13: 1-10; 13: 11-16; Deut. 6: 4-9; 11: 13-21.

Note Christ's interpretations of the commandments in the Sermon on the Mount.

Study the history of the Tables of Stone: Ex. 24: 12; 31: 18; 32: 15-19; 34: 1; Deut. 4: 13; 9: 9-11; 10: 1-5; 1 Kings 8: 9; Heb. 9: 4.

Read Psalms 19, 119.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Get the scholars to work out the Inductive Study. If each of them cannot do it all, then assign portions to different scholars.

Assign also the four commandments we study to-day to four scholars, and request them to find references and examples, and Christ's interpretations to the ones assigned them.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The most intense and powerful book on the Ten Commandments is Farrar's *Voice from Sinai* (\$1.25, Whittaker). F. D. Maurice, *The Ten Commandments Considered as Instruments of National Reformation*, and his *Social Morality*. Chadwick's treatment in *The Expositor's Bible* is especially fine. Patterson's article on the "Decalogue" in *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*. *Weighed and Wanting*, by D. L. Moody (30 cents, Revell). *The Law of the Ten Words*, by Dykes (Hodder & Stoughton). *The Ten Commandments*, by Dale (Pilgrim Press). *The Ten Commandments in the Nineteenth Century*, by Schenck (Funk & Wagnalls). *The Ten Commandments as a Covenant of Love*, by H. Clay Trumbull, D. D. *University Lectures on the Ten Commandments*, by Boardman (Am. Baptist Pub. Soc.) Stanley Leathes, *The Foundations of Morality*. *The Ten Words*, by Charles Caverno (\$1.00, Pilgrim Press). *Some Observations on the Inconvenience of the Ten Commandments*, by George Hammer Leicester, a quaint treatise published at Oxford in 1795.

LITERARY REFERENCES.

The giving of the law described by Milton in *Paradise Lost*, XII. 227-244. "On Sinai's Top in Prayer and Trance," by Bishop Keble. "The Tables of Stone," by Thomas Toke Lynch. Lowell's "Vision of Sir Launfal" in the prelude has an interesting reference to Sinai. Clough's *Poems*, "The New Sinai."

PRONUNCIATIONS.

Er Râ'hâh, Ră Süsâ'fêh, S'ynâi (S'ynă) or S'ynâi, Sîn, Hô'reb, Wă'dy, Měr'ibâh, Rêph'îdîm, Am'ălekites, Aar'ôn, Mîr'îâm, Hûr, Jêth'rô or Jê'thrô, Reu'êl, Zippô'râh or Zip'porâh, Gêr'shôm, Eli'ê'zêr.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"How gentle God's commands."
"My dear Redeemer and my God."

PLAN OF THE LESSON.**SUBJECT: God's Covenant of Love with His Children.****I. THE SCENE. MT. SINAI AND ITS SURROUNDINGS.****II. THE AWFUL SANCTIONS (Exodus 19).**

1. The preparation of the heart.
2. The voice from the cloud and fire.

III. THE COVENANT OF LOVE (Exodus 20).

1. The covenant of Law.
2. The covenant of Love.
3. Religion and Morality.

IV. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

1. Divine laws.
2. Germs or seeds.
3. Leading to Christ.
4. The two tables.

FIRST COMMANDMENT.**SECOND COMMANDMENT.****THIRD COMMANDMENT.****FOURTH COMMANDMENT.****LEARN BY HEART.**

Vs. 3-11; Matt. 22: 37-40.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

I consecrate myself to God, to do his commandments.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.— Fifty days after leaving Egypt (Ex. 19: 1, 15).

The day of Pentecost, the feast of first fruits. Some time in May.

1491 B. C. or perhaps 1300.

Place.— In the plain at the base of Mt. Sinai in the southern part of the Sinaitic peninsula between the two northern arms of the Red Sea.

HOME WORK**AND CLASS DISCUSSION.**

Incidents on the way to Sinai.
The sum of the commandments.
Why they were given amid such scenes.
How they were a covenant between the Israelites and God.
Have they ever been outgrown?
Each commandment.



From a Photograph by Wilson.

Ras-Sufsâfeh.

From the Plain of the Assemblage.

Mousa, "Mountain of Moses," 7,363 feet above the sea, in the wild, mountainous region of the glorious range of granite mountains of which Sinai is the nucleus. At its north-western base stretches Er-Râhah, "the wilderness of Sinai," the only plain in the neighborhood capable of holding two million persons, allowing a square yard for each. The camp itself (*Palmer*) was doubtless more extensive, occupying the neighboring glens and mountainsides, wherever there was sufficient fertility for the cattle. Fronting the plain is a lofty and precipitous bluff, Ras-Sufsâfeh, whence, probably, the law was proclaimed.

The scene "presents a vivid contrast of color in the green waving treetops and the dark, frowning cliffs, standing out against the clear, sapphire blue of the sky." — *Mrs. Lewis*.

The people were encamped "in a vast sanctuary, not made with hands, — a sanctuary where every outward shape of life, animal or vegetable, such as in Egypt had attracted their wonder and admiration, was withdrawn. Bare and unclothed, the mountains rose around them; their very shapes and colors were such as to carry their thoughts back to the days of old creation, 'from everlasting to everlasting, before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made.'"

"The cliff, rising like a huge altar in front of the whole congregation, and visible against the sky in lonely grandeur, from end to end of the whole plain, is the very image of 'the mount that might be touched,' and from which the voice of God might be heard, far and wide, over the stillness of the plain below, widened at that point to its utmost extent by the confluence of all the contiguous valleys."

Note three things which will help to make this scene more real to us.

1. In this region were the famous copper mines which the Egyptians had wrought for centuries, and which still exist, — mingled with iron, magnesia, cobalt, manganese, and specimens of turquoise.

2. In this region are the famous inscriptions of ancient Egypt. One place is called "the written valley." The inscriptions are on the rough side of the rocks in letters from 2 to 12 inches in length, made by heavy scratches, with rude figures of animals.

3. Here at the convent, on the mountainside, Tischendorf found in 1844 the best New Testament manuscript, the "Sinaiticus," now in St. Petersburg, and very lately, February, 1892, Mrs. Lewis and her twin sister, Mrs. Gibson, found in the convent of St. Catherine, on Mt. Sinai, a Palimpsest, the most ancient known manuscript of the four Gospels in Syriac; and, later, other important manuscripts.

II. The Awful Sanctions. — Exodus 19. **FIRST. PREPARATION OF HEART.** The children of Israel now came to the greatest change in all their lives, toward which all their past history was leading; they were to become by choice God's covenant people. And

THE JOURNEY from the crossing of the Red Sea to Sinai was about 150 miles, and occupied nearly 50 days (Ex. 19: 1, where "the third month" is the month of the year), the exodus having taken place on the fourteenth day of the first month (Ex. 12: 2, 18, 29).

The chief incidents were:

1. The bitter waters of Marah sweetened.

2. The encampment by the wells and palm trees of Elim.

3. The giving of the manna, first in the wilderness of Sin.

4. The gift of the water from a rock at Meribah.

5. The battle with the Amalekites, when Aaron and Hur held up the hands of Moses; the first battle the Israelites fought.

6. The organization of the nation by rulers of various grades under Moses.

1. The Scene. Mt. Sinai and Its Surroundings. — The exact mountain is uncertain, but *Hastings' Bible Dictionary* inclines to the traditional Jebel

everything that could possibly make a permanent impression on their hearts and history is brought to bear upon them.

They were reminded of what God had done for them, how he had borne them "on eagles' wings" (vs. 3-6).

They made a public choice and confession of obedience and took an oath of allegiance (vs. 7, 8).

They were made to purify themselves outwardly and within.

They were forbidden even to touch the bounds of the mountain on penalty of death.

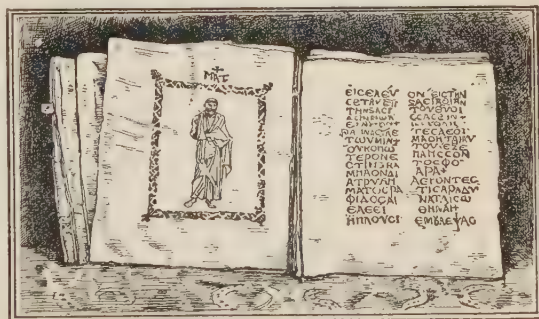
SECOND. The voice of God came under the most awful, reverential, and impressive circumstances. Himself — the unseen God — hidden by thick clouds on the mountain top, yet revealed his power and glory by thunders and lightnings and "the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud." Dr. Stewart in *Tent and Khan* describes a storm he witnessed on Mt. Sinai. "Every bolt as it burst, with the roar of a cannon, seemed to awaken a series of distinct echoes on every side; . . . they swept like a whirlwind among the higher mountains, becoming faint as some mighty peak intervened, and bursting with undiminished volume through some yawning cleft, till the very ground trembled with the concussion. . . . It seemed as if the mountains of the whole peninsula were answering one another in a chorus of the deepest bass. Ever and anon a flash of lightning dispelled the pitchy darkness and lit up the Mount as if it had been day; then, after the interval of a few seconds, came the peal of thunder, bursting like a shell, to scatter its echoes to the four quarters of the heavens."

But, while the thunderstorm reveals the mighty power of God, there was more here than this ordinary power, for it was also God's special intervention to prove that what he said was not merely natural, but was supernatural, the direct eternal law of God. They were ushered in "with the mighty overture, 'God spake these words and said.'"

III. **The Covenant of Love.** — Exodus 20. "In the Old Testament there are four covenants: that with NOAH, of which the rainbow was the sign, promising safety from destruction to all mankind; that with ABRAHAM, of which circumcision was the sign; that with ISRAEL as a nation, of which the sign was the Passover; and that of which the Sabbath was the sign for all mankind. The record of the Mosaic Law is called 'the book of the covenant' (Ex. 24: 7). But the main covenants between God and man are two — the Mosaic and the Christian, the Law and the Gospel." — *Farrar*. Testament means *covenant*, and our Bible consists of the *Old Covenant* and the *New Covenant*.

THE COVENANT OF THE LAW was brought before the people at Sinai. The commandments were this written covenant. On the one hand, God agrees to be their God, giving his fatherly care and love and forgiveness and protection, while they, on their part, agree to keep his commandments and serve him alone. If they disobey, they forfeit all these blessings, as described in Deuteronomy 28-30. "Like her in the Knight's Dream of Raphael," it carries in one hand the book of duty, 'This do, and thou shalt live'; but in the other the drawn sword, 'Do it not, and thou shalt perish.' — *Farrar*.

THE COVENANT OF LOVE. The Ten Commandments "are the simple words of God's loving covenant with his people, and not arbitrary commandings of God to his subjects." They are "a loving covenant that binds two parties in mutual affection and fidelity," "having its statement of promises on the one hand, and responsibilities on the other." "A covenant among the Orientals is, and always has been, a sacred compact binding two parties in loving agreement." — *Henry Clay Trumbull*. See President Mark Hopkins' *Law of Love and Love as Law*. We realize that these commandments are really "a covenant of love," given to us



From a Photograph by Wilson.

"Book of the Gospels."

In the convent library of St. Catherine, near Jubel Mousa, dating from the time of Theodosius II., A. D. 766. The portraits of the apostles are in color with a background of burnished gold. The text is written in Greek, with gold on parchment.

1. And God spake ¹ all these words, saying,
 2. ² I ^{am} the LORD thy God, which ^{have} brought thee out of the land of E'gypt, ³ out of the house of ^a bondage.

¹ Deut. 5: 22.² Lev. 26: 1; Psal. 81: 10.³ Ex. 13: 3.^a Hebrew, *bondmen*.

because God loves us, as an expression of his love, as obedience to them is the channel and expression of our love to God and man, when we read God's revelation of himself to Moses on the same Mount, — "The LORD passed by and proclaimed, The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty." "The union of the qualities, so often disjoined in man, so little thought of in the gods of old, 'justice and mercy,' 'truth and love,' became henceforward the formula, many times repeated — the substance of the creed of the Jewish church," and revealed to the whole world when "Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ."

"The topping crags of Duty scaled
 Lie close upon the shining table-lands
 To which our God himself is moon and sun."

The sum of them is stated both in Deuteronomy and by Christ to be LOVE. Love to God and to man.

RELIGION AND MORALITY. "Josephus said that in other systems virtue was made a part of religion, but in God's covenant with Israel religion was but a part of virtue. It would be truer to say that the two are inseparably united. In no other religion was it made so clear that the end of the law is to make men righteous. Because, if there be one thing which history has taught more clearly than another, it is that a nation cannot lose its religion without losing also its virtue and its integrity; and the fate of nation after nation, in epoch after epoch, has shown that ages of mental disbelief are ages also of moral iniquity." — *Farrar*.

IV. General Characteristics of the Ten Commandments. FIRST. THEY ARE DIVINE LAWS. — Vs. 1, 2. 1. And God spake all these words, in three ways: (1) by his voice; (2) by writing them on the tablets of stone; and (3) he has written them on the very nature of man. Still, it is necessary that they should be definitely expressed, because it would have taken ages for man to discover them, if he ever did, and they needed the divine authority behind them to make them effective.

We are not to imagine that nothing of these commands was known before Moses. They were written on the hearts and consciences of men from the beginning. We see them in the early history.

They are a lesson for all mankind. The Jews said that this was the reason why the commandments were not delivered in Palestine, which belonged to Israel, but in the wilderness, which belongs to all the world. Heaven lives according to these commands. But they needed to be put in clear and memorable form, distinct, with God's whole nature and authority behind them. He impressed them on the Jews in such a way that they mark a decisive epoch not only in the history of the Jews, but of all mankind, "the greatest and most important event in universal history" up to the advent of Christ. "They are eternal, inexorable, irresistible!"

"If thou hast wanderings in the wilderness
 And findest not Sinai, 'tis thy soul is poor;
 There towers the mountain of the Voice no less
 Which whoso seeks shall find, but he who bends
 Intent on manna still and mortal ends
 Sees it not, neither hears its thundered lore." — *Lovell*.

"Some years ago a United States senator announced that purification of politics was an iridescent dream, and that the Decalogue and the Golden Rule had no place in public life. . . . Washington's whole life is meaningless if it does not show that the Decalogue and the Golden Rule should form the standard for public men above all others." — *President Roosevelt*.

SECOND. They are germs or seeds from which the tree of the virtues grows and blossoms and bears fruit; unfolding their details through the ages according to their circumstances and needs. "There is not a sin but is aimed at and denounced in one or other of

3. ¹ Thou shalt have ^{no} none other gods before me.

4. ² Thou shalt not make unto thee ^{any} a graven image, ^{or any likeness of} or any likeness of ^{nor the likeness} that ^{is} in heaven above, or that ^{is} in the earth beneath, or that ^{is} in the water under the earth:

5. ³ Thou shalt not bow down thyself ^{to} unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God ^{am} ⁴ a jealous God, ⁵ visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, ^{unto} the third and ^{upon the} fourth ^{generation} of them that hate me;

6. ^{And} ^{and} ⁶ shewing mercy unto thousands, of them that love me: and keep my commandments.

¹ Deut. 5: 7; Jer. 25: 6.

² Lev. 26: 1; Deut. 4: 16; Psal. 97: 7.

³ Ex. 23: 24; Isa. 44: 15, 19.

⁴ Ex. 34: 14; Deut. 4: 24.

⁵ Ex. 34: 7; Lev. 20: 5; Num. 14: 18; Psal. 79: 8; Isa. 14: 20, 21.

⁶ Ex. 34: 7; Psal. 89: 34; Rom. 11: 28.

the ten! God looks over this awful 'world' of sin. He divides sins, just as we divide languages, into certain classes or sets. He takes ten great classes, or *nations*, or *languages*, or *tribes* of sins, and denounces them all.

"Now, each of these tribes or nations of sins has a king or chief. So the Almighty declares war against the king or chief. As, in the Crimean War, the Queen of Great Britain declared war against 'the Emperor of all the Russias'—yet the war was really against the Russian nation—so God declares war against each king of each nation of sins, by name; but the conflict is with the whole tribe or nation of which he is head."—*Rev. William Wye Smith.*

The First Commandment.—V. 3. **Thou shalt have no other gods before me.** "Side by side with me," "in addition to me," "in my presence," and therefore "in preference to me." The God who, though unseen, had delivered them and fed them was to be their God, their leader, their sovereign; the One they would trust and obey, to whom and to whose kingdom they would make their covenant of allegiance. This God was the Creator of all things, as expressed in the fourth commandment—the eternal, self-existent God revealed to them through Moses. He was their ideal, their Father in heaven. He was not a mere tribal God, as some assert. He was the God of all the earth, though others worshiped false gods, while they were to worship Jehovah alone. When we speak of the Greek and Roman gods and of our God, it would be an unjust inference that we believed our God to be merely an American God. The first commandment forbids idolatry, which consists in loving anything or any one more than God. It requires whole-hearted service of God, and especially the sincere worship which is at the basis of all service. It forbids heart idols, idols of wealth or ambition or vanity or fashion, as well as idols made of wood and stone.

The Second Commandment.—Vs. 4-6. This forbids making any representation of God as a means of worshiping him.

THE FIRST REASON is that all images misrepresent God. They are not like God. They do not represent God as pictures of a friend represent him to us.

THE SECOND REASON. 5. **I . . . am a jealous God, i. e.,** not willing that any other should be regarded as his equal, or take his place in the affections and worship of his people; because no other can take his place; no other can love as he loves, or help as he helps. Every idol god is not only useless, but leads to immorality.

THE THIRD REASON. **Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children.** The visitation here spoken of can hardly be any other than that which we are accustomed to witness in the common experience of life (Ex. 34: 7; Jer. 32: 18). It is a statement of the scientific doctrine of heredity. The evils of idolatry, its moral consequences and disasters fall even more on our children than on ourselves.

One of the strongest motives ever presented in favor of a moral and godly life is the effect of our sins upon our children. **Unto the third and fourth generation.** There is a limit to this evil inheritance, and a great opportunity of recovery. It is in this that the hope of the race lies. The forces of good are stronger and more persistent than those of evil.

6. **Shewing mercy, favor, kindness to the guilty. Unto thousands of generations.** See margin of R. V., also Deut. 7: 9; Psal. 105: 8. "Judgment is God's strange work, while mercy is his delight. So richly does the loving God reward his dutiful and

7. ¹ Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD ² will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

8. ³ Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9. ⁴ Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

¹ Ex. 23: 1; Psa. 15: 4; Matt. 5: 33.
² Mic. 6: 11.

³ Ex. 31: 13.
⁴ Ex. 23: 12; Luke 13: 14.

trustful children. So much more grateful to his heart it is to bless, even to the thousandth generation, than to visit iniquity, even so far as to the third and fourth." — *Cowles*.

See this truth illustrated in Abraham and the patriarchs, and the whole Jewish history.

"A muttered curse, an angry word
From unaccustomed lips was heard;
It echoed in another's life,
Engendered hatred, malice, strife,
Till in a third all bounds it swept,
And parents o'er a murderer wept.

"A blessing fell like evening dew
Upon a heart that evil knew:
From anger's sway it gave release,
And filled another's heart with peace,
While of a third, the people say,
'A saint is dwelling here to-day.'"
— *John L. Shroy*.

The Third Commandment.—V. 7. **Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain, i. e., lightly, carelessly, thoughtlessly, insincerely.**

1. This forbids professing to be God's people, in covenant relations with him, and then acting in a manner that dishonors God and misrepresents him before the world. It disgraces religion, and drives men from God.

2. It forbids perjury. "False swearing is among the greatest insults that man can offer to God, and, as being such, is naturally forbidden in the first table, which teaches us our duty to God. It is also destructive of civil society; and hence it is again forbidden in the second table (v. 16), which defines our duties to our neighbor." — *Ellicott*.

3. But it does not forbid what is called taking an oath in court; for that is a simple affirmation in the solemn presence of God to tell the truth, ending with a prayer for help to do it. The way these oaths are sometimes administered borders very closely on the breaking of this command.

4. It forbids all profanity, the careless, irreverent use of God's name and of holy things, because it tends to destroy the power of these things over men. Profanity is ungentlemanly; it belongs to the slums, and is outlawed by good society. It is publicly saying to all who hear, "I am no gentleman." An old writer said that when the accusing angel, who records men's words, flies up to heaven with an oath, he blushes as he hands it in.

5. It enforces Christ's interpretation that all efforts to support our assertions of a fact beyond the simple "yes" or "no" repeated cometh of evil. It weakens the assertion itself.

6. All thoughtless worship comes under the ban of this commandment.

The LORD will not hold him guiltless. This is emphasized because of its importance, because the evil effects are not immediately visible. The punishment comes in the effect on the character, the loss of power for good in the evil wrought. As to perjury, the "laws of all organized States necessarily forbid it, and generally under a very severe penalty. The Jewish Law condemned the false witness to suffer the punishment which his evidence was calculated to inflict (Deut. 19: 19). The Egyptians visited perjury with death or mutilation. The Greeks were content to punish it with a heavy fine, and ultimately with the loss of civil rights. They believed a divine Nemesis pursued those who committed it, and made them suffer for their sin, either in their own person or in that of their posterity." — *Ellicott*.

The Fourth Commandment.—Vs. 8-11. **8. Remember the sabbath day.** Remember implies that the Sabbath already existed. **To keep it holy.** Possibly we talk too much about what *not* to do on the Sabbath. Here is the great thing to *do*: worship; keep the day sacred for religious duties and inspiration, the culture of the soul of yourself and of others. The wall of this law is to keep out all those things which would destroy the power of this law of love. There is no existing institution which has so much to do with the highest interests of man, his morals, his character, his civilization, his comfort, his freedom, his onward march to the millennium, as has the Sabbath, rightly kept.

9. **Six days shalt thou labour.** This is essential to the best good of each man and of all men.

10. ^{But} the ¹ seventh day ^{is the} sabbath ^{of} the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, ² nor thy stranger that ^{is} within thy gates:

11. ^{For} ³ ⁱⁿ six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them ^{is}, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

¹ Gen. 2: 2, 3; Ex. 16: 26.

² Neh. 13: 16.

³ Gen. 2: 2.

10. **The seventh day**, after six days of labor. The Christian Sabbath is as really the seventh day as the Jewish Sabbath. **Thou, nor thy son**, etc. No one under your control shall spoil your Sabbath, not even a visitor.

11. **For in six days**, etc. See Lesson I., First Quarter. God himself set us the example as to the work we should do, and of the principles of our Sabbath-keeping. **The LORD blessed the sabbath day**, and his blessing has remained upon it to this day, making it the choicest of blessings to man in body, soul, and spirit, for time and for eternity, for this world and the world to come.

LESSON III. — July 21.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS — DUTIES TOWARD MEN. — Exodus 20: 12-17.

READ Exodus 20, 24. COMMIT vs. 12-17.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* — LEV. 19: 18.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Take each commandment and find examples in the Bible of persons who kept it, and of those who broke it, and trace out the reasons and the results.

Find other passages—in the Bible, and especially in the teachings of Christ—which enforce or interpret or illustrate each commandment.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Of course the teacher will see that each scholar knows the commandments by heart.

Then be sure that he so understands them that he sees their application to his own life.

Cause him to see how they are commandments of love, every one of them a step upward toward the heavenly life, so that, in the words of Dean Farrar, "your souls may be a picture gallery. Let their walls be hung with all things sweet and perfect—the thought of God, the image of Christ, the lives of God's saints and the aspirations of good and great men."

Cause him to place his life beside this ideal, and to see how far short he is from living up to it, so that he shall not imagine with the rich young ruler that he has "kept all these from his youth up," but, like the disciples, say to Jesus, "Save, Lord, I perish."

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 12-17; Matt. 5: 19.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

The same as in the last lesson.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The same as in Lesson II.

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Mrs. Heman's *Poems*, "Cœur de Lion at the bier of his father." Poem, "Joy is a duty," ending with "Life is divine when duty is a joy."

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Saviour, teach me day by day."
"So let our lips and lives express."

PLAN OF THE LESSON.
SUBJECT: Duties toward Our
Fellow Men.

GENERAL VIEW of the second table of
the Law.

Diagram.

- FIFTH COMMANDMENT.
- SIXTH COMMANDMENT.
- SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.
- EIGHTH COMMANDMENT.
- NINTH COMMANDMENT.
- TENTH COMMANDMENT.

With explanations and applications.

THE COVENANT OF RATIFICATION.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DE-
CIDING PRACTICAL
QUESTIONS.

Putting these commandments into daily practice,
especially the one you are most tempted to break.

HOME WORK
AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Each of these six commandments and present-day
applications.

The effect on the world if every one kept the Ten
Commandments.

GENERAL VIEW. We will be able to teach these commandments more effectively if we
keep before our minds the purpose for which they were ordained and a general view of
their teachings.

Their object is the making of man.

1. The individual man brought into a "perfect man" like Christ Jesus.

2. Out of the individuals to form a perfect moral world, the kingdom of heaven on earth.

Herbert Spencer's conclusion as to the outcome of the process of social evolution is "a
kind of man so constituted that, while fulfilling his own desires, he fulfils also the social
needs." "The ultimate man will be one whose private requirements coincide with the
public ones. He will be that manner of man who in spontaneously fulfilling his own
nature incidentally performs the functions of a social unit, and yet is only enabled to so
fulfil his own nature by all others doing the like." "Therefore, the strongest possible
society is one whose individuals are left free to follow their own inclinations, but whose in-
clinations will lead them to promote the good of the whole."

ILLUSTRATION. NO ONE CAN STAND ALONE. "No rivet forged can stand the
strain! 'No one rivet was ever meant to. Share it among you,' the Steam answered," so
writes Kipling, in *The Ship that Found Herself*.

The *Dimbula*, though ready to sail from Liverpool to New York, was not yet a real
ship, for, as her skipper said: "'It takes more than christenin' to mak' a ship. In the na-
tur' o' things, . . . she's just irons and rivets and plates put into the form of a ship. She
has to find herself yet. . . . She's all here, but the parts of her have not learned to work
together yet. . . . Every inch of her, ye'll understand, has to be livened up and made to
work wi' his neighbor — sweetenin' her, we call it, technically.'"

We gain a clearer view by means of the following diagram.

THE MAKING OF A MAN — FORMING THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.			
DUTIES	IN RELATION TO	CONCERNING	CHANNELS FOR THE
TO GOD RELIGION	I. One God	Supreme Love	Expression of Love to God. Aids and Inspirations.
	II. True Worship	Spiritual Loyalty	
	III. Loyalty	In Spirit and Truth	
	IV. Consecration	Religious Culture	
	V. Parents	Honor	Father in Heaven. Earthly Parents.
TO MAN MORALS	VI. Life	Love	Fulfilling of Love to Man. The Working Out of the GOLDEN RULE.
	VII. Family	Purity	
	VIII. Property	Honesty	
	IX. Reputation	Truth	
	X. Motives	Purifying the Fountain.	

12. ¹ Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. .

¹ Ex. 23: 26; Matt. 15: 4; Mark 7: 10; Luke 18: 20.

NOTE (1) that the religious side must come first, as the inspiration to perform our duties toward man. Love to God our Father will necessarily lead to love to our fellow men, his children.

NOTE. (2) When our hearts are filled with love to God and man, then they are no longer restraints, but guides as to the way our love should express itself. They are like fences by the roadside, showing us the way to go. We obey them as freely as the bird sings. They are as natural to us as breathing.

"Joy is duty,"—so with golden lore
The Hebrew rabbis taught in days of yore,
And happy human hearts heard in their speech
Almost the highest wisdom man can reach.

But one bright peak still rises far above,
And there the Master stands whose name is Love,
Saying to those whom heavy tasks employ,
'Life is divine when duty is a joy.'

NOTE. (3) These commandments are to convince us of sin. As we stand beside this ideal we realize how far short we have come, and repent in dust and ashes. Theodore Parker said that if the good deacons who confessed their sins in prayer-meeting told the truth they ought to be sent to State prison. But the fact is they felt their sins more than others because they had a higher standard, and saw them exemplified in the Lord Jesus, where

"They shine like Moses in the face."

Thus, says Farrar, "you can understand why Bunyan, in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, represents Moses as so furious and terrific, knocking Faithful down terribly with a word and a blow, and dragging Christian under the threatening crags of Sinai."

Thus the law is our "schoolmaster" to lead us to Christ. No word in English can express the meaning of the Greek word, but Farrar illustrates it from *Plato* ("Lysis," c. 12).

Socrates: "Do they allow you to govern yourself, or do they not even permit you this?"—"How can they?" he said.

"Who, then, rules over you?"—"The pedagogue," said he.

"What, though he is a slave?"—"What, then?" he said; "he is our own slave."

"Strange," said I, "that you who are free should be ruled by a slave; and in what actions, tell me, does this slave rule over you?"—"Why, of course he leads me to the teachers," said he.

"The *paidagogos*," says Lightfoot, "had the whole early direction of the child."

The Fifth Commandment. 1. This commandment belongs to both tables of the law. Since God is our Father we are taught to honor him as a father. "If then, I be a father, where is mine honor? . . . saith the Lord of hosts unto you" (Mal. 1: 6). To the young child the parents are in the place of the heavenly Father, to lead the child up to him. The word *pietas*, whence our "piety," meant originally the duty of men to God reflected in their duty towards their parents. So in 1 Tim. 5: 4, the Greek word for *show piety* at home, *eusebein*, and its Latin equivalent, *colere*, honor, reverence, worship, is applied both to God and to parents.

2. "We are bidden to *honor*, because love is instinctive, and can only be spontaneous. The honor for our parents is love combined with reverence; the love must be honor touched with emotion. The word 'honor' includes 'love,' for there can be no true honor without love."—Farrar.

3. It applies to both parents. "Mother stands out as clear as Sinai itself. There is no cloud on her majesty. Such honor as goes to the father goes to the mother."—Caverno.

4. We honor by love, by courteous attentions, by giving them the best, by always treating them with honor in the presence of others, by deferring to their wishes.

5. The fifth commandment "is the sanctification of social life" and "the surest basis of all righteous government." In its widest sense it respects gray hairs everywhere, and honors all in authority over you, such as your pastor, teacher, employer, or magistrates. Lack in this respect is a growing evil, full of mischief to our nation.

6. The fifth commandment does not require a child to do wrong at a parent's bidding, but it does require a child to love even unlovely parents, because they hold to him the sacred relation of father and mother.

13. ¹ Thou shalt ^{not kill.}
do no murder.

¹ Deut. 5: 17; Matt. 5: 21.

"Are the children to show no forbearance to the sins of their parents? Alas for earth, if unworthiness is to sever the bonds of love and duty!"

THE PROMISE. St. Paul calls this "the first commandment with promise." Probably the true translation is "the commandment foremost with a promise"; the promise is most conspicuous so as "to render itself attractive and encouraging." The effect of disobedience is not so immediate or conspicuous at first, and, therefore, the blessing of obedience should be made impressive and certain.

(1) "Individually even, the boy who loves and honors his parents will, as a rule, be more prosperous, be in all respects more happy, be more blessed than the bad son. A distinguished officer in the army told me that his experience in a long life had been exactly the same as that of an old admiral, who said that of all the midshipmen who had passed under his rule he had never known one fail to turn out well who wrote weekly his loving letters to his home. Oh! may it never be your lot to cry with the poet to some dead father or mother:

' Ah! would that I could see thee in thy heaven
For one brief hour, and know I was forgiven! '

You who are yet what the Greeks beautifully called ἀμφιβαλεις, 'doubly endowed,' 'blossoming on both sides' — that is, whose parents are both still living — do not, by ingratitude to them, embitter your future years with regrets. And, for the other side of the picture, recall the most overwhelming of all Shakespeare's tragedies. The tragedy of 'King Lear' turns mainly on the foul ingratitude of Goneril and Regan, in contrast with the speechless, yearning love of Cordelia, faithful to the death. It is filial untenderness which wrings from the old, dazed, heart-broken, tempest-beaten king the agonizing cry —

' How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child! '

(2) But the main intention of the promise was national, and all history has confirmed its national fulfilment. 'The corner-stone of the commonwealth,' it has been said, 'is the hearthstone.' Why was one Spartan worth ten other Greeks in a battle? It was because Spartan boys were trained in parental obedience." — *F. W. Farrar*.

The Sixth Commandment. — V. 13. Thou shalt not kill. The R. V. gives the thought more accurately, "Thou shalt do no murder." Killing is sometimes justifiable; the Bible itself enjoins the killing of men for punishment of those who murder, in order to prevent, by the punishment of the guilty, the murder of the innocent.

The primary aim of the commandment is to inculcate reverence for human life. "It stands for a great principle which is applicable alike to all peoples and to all times."

"Was there ever a more wicked speech uttered than that of Napoleon I., when Prince Metternich told him that his plan would cost the lives of a hundred thousand men, and he haughtily replied, 'A hundred thousand men? What is a hundred thousand men to me?'" — *Farrar*.

"The breadth of this commandment is that 'we hurt nobody by word nor deed; that we bear no malice nor hatred in our heart.' " "Who so hateth his brother is a murderer."

The commandment forbids all those things which shorten the life of others, — crowded, ill-ventilated factories, slum conditions in the cities, overworking children, the ruin of many by breaking the seventh commandment, carelessness on railroads and steamboats, fire-traps, adulterated foods.

It forbids suicide and all those things which shorten and lessen the value of our lives, — gluttony, drunkenness, intemperance, which leads to murder of others, as well as ruin of the life of the drinker.

But it does not forbid us to risk our lives to save others, or to take our lives in our hands for the sake of righteousness, the nobler life of the soul. Heroes and martyrs do not break this law.

Nor does this law forbid the execution of murderers, as is plain from the executions that took place in that very generation. This is to save life, the life of the innocent.

Dr. Andrew D. White, in an address the week of this writing, speaking of the increase of crime, says "that only one out of every 46 homicides is legally punished. In the next

14. ¹ Thou shalt not commit adultery.

15. ² Thou shalt not steal.

¹ Deut. 5: 18; Matt. 5: 27.

² Lev. 19: 11; Matt. 19: 18.

year 9,000 people will be murdered in this country. As I stand here to-day I tell you 9,000 people are doomed to death with all the cruelty of the criminal heart, and with no regard to home and family ties. I have no sympathy with the criminal. My sympathy is for those who will be murdered, for their families and for their children. I have sympathy for the criminal, but not of the kind that would save him from punishment at the expense of the murder of innocent persons."

Seventh Commandment. — V. 14. This is the safeguard of the home and the family.

1. Primarily, the seventh commandment forbids adultery, and the sins which, under slight differences, are cognate with it.

2. It forbids all impure thoughts, and the books and pictures and plays and acts which tend to excite such thoughts and inspire impure acts. Plato would exclude from his ideal republic everything that would debase the taste, even all poor pictures and poor workmanship.

3. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," while the impure soon lose all sense of divine things. No sin, not even intemperance, so rapidly ruins a man, body, mind, and soul, as this sin.

4. The way to overcome this evil is by the good, — true love and happy marriage, a mind full of good thoughts, a life full of good deeds. Let us seek the perpetual aid of that Holy Spirit

"that doth prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure."

The Eighth Commandment. — V. 15. Is the safeguard of personal and property rights, and the wall of defence against the temptations to selfishness and crime.

The crime of theft is, of all others, the meanest and most despicable. It is selfishness incarnate. To gain by stealing is far worse for the thief than for the one wronged. A clear conscience is worth more than all the world. Plato illustrates the test of honesty by the story of Gyges' ring, which made the wearer invisible. He that is honest, even when he can be dishonest without being found out, is a truly honest man. See Plato's *Republic*, bk. II., chap. 3.

There are many kinds of theft, and all degrees, but the spirit is the same. The fruit is from the same tree of selfishness. Even children may be guilty, cheating in examinations, playing marbles for keeps, and various ways. "It is not only against the sneaking or the murderous thief, but against all who plunder others, even by means ostensibly legal: it is against all usurers, cheats, extortioners, foul dealers in bargains and contracts; it is against all who by their deceits, chicaneries, and swindlings sin against the rights of their neighbors, that the eighth commandment is directed. 'Will a man rob God? yet ye rob me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with the curse, for ye rob me, even the whole nation.' So writes the last of the Old Testament prophets." — *Farrar*.

The penalty is very great; "against all such Christ and his Apostles have closed the gates of the kingdom of God. . . . Unfit to be citizens of any worthy earthly commonwealth, how is it possible that, till they have been utterly purged of these vile sins, they should be citizens of that heavenly city of which the builder and maker is God?" — *Farrar*.

The penalty is also deterioration of character. "Is our model to be Dives in purple and fine linen, with Lazarus starving at his gate; or the rich fool whose only notion of his duties was to pull down his barns and build greater, and say to his soul, 'Eat, drink, and be merry?'" Pope says, "An honest man's the noblest work of God." And Burns sang:

"A prince can mak' a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, and a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Guid faith, he maunna fa' that."

"Show me a people where trade is dishonest, and I will show you a people where religion is a sham." — *Froude, Short Studies*, i. 123.

16. ¹ Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

17. ² Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, ³ thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

¹ Ex. 23: 1; Matt. 19: 18.

² Deut. 5: 21; Luke 12: 15.

³ Job 31: 9; Matt. 5: 28.

Bradstreet, investigating the causes of bankruptcies, says that "only about twenty per cent. of the failures were due to what may be called legitimate causes and undue competition, while four-fifths of the men who fail are either dishonest or incompetent."

Ninth Commandment. — V. 16. Forbids false statements in a case of law, — perjury. "It is a prohibition of slander, or of careless speech affecting the good name of one's fellow man. This is not, as many have supposed, a mere injunction to truthful speech on all occasions." — *Trumbull*.

"Who steals my purse steals trash,
But he who filches from me my good name

Robs me of that which not enriches him,
Yet leaves me poor indeed."

It prohibits all untruthfulness of every kind. This commandment is broken (1) not only by slanderers, but by those who listen to their slanders. These speak evil of their neighbors when they do not *know* that the evil is true, and also when it is not necessary that the evil be told. (2) By those who insinuate evil against others. (3) Hypocrites, who try to appear what they are not, like the veiled prophet of Khorassan in "Lalla Rookh." (4) Those who act lies, put lying labels on their goods, put the best things on the top of the basket or barrel. (5) Those who are careless about speaking the truth. (6) Gossips who retail scandal, who report only the bad, and not the good, about persons. It has been said that if every person had a trumpet like the one in Hood's "Tale of a Trumpet," by which people heard not the words, but the thoughts of others, there would be few friends left in the world. (7) Those who misrepresent other people, churches, sects, or parties, whether intentionally or carelessly, not having taken all the pains possible to learn the truth. (8) Those who impute false and unworthy motives to others. (9) Those who put false names to things; bad names on good things, or good names on bad things: as calling strict Christians, puritanical; uprightness, stiffness; virtue, prudishness; or, calling dishonesties, business transactions; slanders, the blunt telling the truth; impoliteness, open-heartedness; carousing, pleasure.

Truthfulness is the only condition on which human intercourse is possible, and it lies at the foundation of all personal character. No matter how bad a man is, there is room for hope with respect to him if he is essentially truthful and honest; but if he is a liar, if truth and error are confounded in his own mind and character, there is nothing to build upon.

The Tenth Commandment. "This is a unique commandment. Search all the laws of all the world, and you will not find one which resembles it. The sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth commandments you will find in all codes, though only as prohibitions of crimes amenable to judicial punishment. The tenth commandment is the complement of all the rest. It shows that God requires of us not only outward virtue, but inward holiness; that he demands in us the sacrifice of the will, from which wicked actions spring; that sinful imaginations are a crime against him as well as wicked acts." — *Farrar*.

It shows that "the individual is not done with morals when he has done with law." — *Caverno*.

Covetousness is not the desire for more; that desire is at the basis of all progress and civilization, and it is right to seek to satisfy it. Covetousness is the desire to possess what another person has. It is a greater sin than envy, which merely wants a duplicate of what another person has. Envy leads to discontent with ourselves; but covetousness, to hatred of others. Envy makes a weakling; covetousness, a fiend. "The practical effect of the tenth commandment, standing where it did, like a solemn appendix to the rest, was to throw back upon them all a more searching light. It was to show that they were to be applied to inward desire, which is sin, as well as to the outward action, which is crime. In effect, it doubled the whole law." — *Dykes*. Read in its light, the sixth commandment, for instance, is broken by the desire to kill as well as by actual murder, and the seventh by lust in the heart as well as by the licentious deed.

The Covenant Ratified. The Ten Commandments were the Law, but they became, by the solemn ratification of the people, a covenant between Israel and Jehovah. Exodus 20-23, containing the Ten Commandments and about seventy enactments based upon them, were written by Moses in a book called "The Book of the Covenant" (Ex. 24: 7). This was read to the people, and they answered with one voice (Ex. 24: 3), "All the words which the Lord hath spoken will we do."

"O Lord, I pray,
That for this day
I may not swerve
By foot or hand
From thy command,
Not to be served, but to serve.

"This, too, I pray,
That for this day
No love of ease
Nor pride prevent
My good intent
Not to be pleased, but to please.

"And, if I may,
I'd have this day
Strength from above
To set my heart
In heavenly art
Not to be loved, but to love."

— *Maltbie D. Babcock.*

LESSON IV. — July 28.

THE GOLDEN CALF. — Exodus 32: 1-8, 30-35.

READ Exodus 32-34. COMMIT vs. 34, 35.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Little children, keep yourselves from idols.* — 1 JOHN 5: 21.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

This lesson presents an example of the breaking of the second commandment, throwing light on its meaning, and the punishment which followed. Make a study of other examples in the history of the Israelites, such as:

In the wilderness.
Under the Judges.
Under the Kings.

And note (1) what led them so frequently into this sin.

2. The evil results.

3. How the evil was finally rooted out of the nation.

Note also the warnings against modern idolatry: Rom. 1: 21-25; 1 Cor. 6: 10; 10: 14, 20-22; 1 John 5: 21; Rev. 21: 8.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Ask the scholars the week before to read over these chapters, Exodus 32-34, more than once, —

1. So as to be able to tell the story in their own words in a picturesque way.

2. So as to note the most interesting and helpful phrases and acts, such as "golden calf," Moses' anger, Aaron's false excuse, breaking the tables of stone, the shining of Moses' face, and others.

In the class let one tell the story, and the others correct errors or supply omissions, till the whole story is very vivid and real.

Then call on the scholars for the most interesting and noteworthy expressions till all are given.

AGELESS HYMN.

"O for a closer walk with God."

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Phillips Brooks' *Sermons*, Vol. III., on "The Fire and the Calf," is very suggestive. Blaikie's *Heroes of Israel*. Louis Albert Banks' *On the Trail of Moses* has two sermons on this lesson. Illustrations of the golden calf in Peloubet's *Suggestive Illustrations on Acts* (p. 165, Holman, \$1.25). Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, Vol. II., Appendix 10, on "Idolatry."

LEARN BY HEART.

1 John 5: 21; 1 Cor. 10: 14; Isa. 40: 28-31.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Look over your life and see if there is anything you choose before doing right, anything you put before loving God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself.

LITERARY REFERENCES.

John Newton's poem, "The Golden Calf," beginning "When Israel heard the fiery law," Trench's *Poems*, "Mahmoud, the Idol-breaker." Two eloquent chapters in Mrs. Whitney's *The Open Mystery* (Houghton, Mifflin & Co.), Arthur H. Clough's "The New Sinai," the last two verses. E. H. Plumptre's "With open face beholding," John Henry Newman's "While Moses on the mountain lay." Keble's "On Sinai's top in prayer and trance."

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — Sometime in July, B. C. 1491 (according to the common chronology), toward the close of Moses' forty days on Mount Sinai; six or seven weeks after the giving of the law.

Place. — The people are still encamped before Mount Sīnāi in the Valley of Er Rāhāh.

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Why the Israelites were so prone to idolatry.
The character of Moses, and
The character of Aaron as revealed in this story.
Was Aaron's story to Moses a falsehood?
Which of the Ten Commandments did the people break?
Modern worship of "the golden calf."
The vision of God, as shown to Moses.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Training in Spiritual Life and Obedience to the Covenant Law of Love.

I. BY THE LONG ABSENCE OF THEIR LEADER (V. 1).

Moses forty days on Mount Sinai.

II. BY FAITH IN AN UNSEEN SPIRITUAL GOD (V. 1).

The desire for a visible God.

III. THE BREAKING OF THE COVENANT BY MAKING A GOLDEN CALF (VS. 2-6).

The call. The calf. The idol worship.

IV. BY THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF MOSES (VS. 7-16).

Moses summoned. The tables of stone broken. Aaron's limp defence.

V. BY THEIR PUNISHMENT.

VI. BY INTERCESSION AND FORGIVENESS (VS. 30-35).

VII. BY THE COVENANT RENEWED.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. And when the people saw that Mō'ses ¹delayed to come down ^{out of} the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aar'on, and said unto him, ²Up, make us gods, which shall ³go before us; for ^{as for} this Mō'ses, the man that brought us up out of the land of E'gypt, we ^{as for} know not what is become of him. ^{wot}

¹ Ex. 24: 18; Deut. 9: 9.

² Acts 7: 40.

³ Ex. 13: 21.

After the commandments had been given by God through Moses and the covenant assented to by the people, Moses again went up into the mount to obtain the commandments in more permanent form, written on tables of stone, and to receive further instructions; and also to be prepared by his intimate communion with God for his long and difficult work of forming the people into a nation that could dwell in the promised land. Every quality of mind and of spirit was to be taxed to the utmost. Every minister, every teacher, every believer needs, says Joseph Parker, "periods of solitude and communing with God; away from the fray, the battle, the race, but receiving nourishment, nutriment, inspiration, comfort, and even words by which to express the divine thought. And, coming back from the mountain of contemplation, he touches life with a steadier hand, and does his duty with a completer obedience and more radiant cheerfulness."

TRAINING IN SPIRITUAL LIFE, AND OBEDIENCE TO THE COVENANT OF LAW AND LOVE.

I. By the Long Absence of Their Leader: Result, A Discouraged People. —

V. 1. **Saw that Moses delayed.** He was gone forty days (Ex. 24: 18), almost seven weeks, if the week with the leaders in the lower parts of the mountain is to be added (Ex. 24: 9, 16). The absence of Moses was a time of testing both the leaders and the

2. And Aar'on said unto them, Break off the ¹golden earrings, which ^{are} in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring ^{them} unto me.

3. And all the people brake off the golden ^{earrings} ^{rings} which ^{were} in their ears, and brought ^{them} unto Aar'on.

¹ Judg. 8 : 24.

people. They had just taken the oath of allegiance to God, and unanimously promised to obey him. But they were inexperienced. They had not acquired habits of intelligent and uniform obedience, their faith was unstrengthened by trial, and their old wayward impulses and habits were awed, but not destroyed. These weeks were their time of trial, of growth, of progress, of development. As Phillips Brooks has well said: "There was no danger that came to the Christian church, as there was no danger that came to the Christian man, that was not capable also of being considered as a chance, an *opportunity* of larger work and of developed life."

The people gathered themselves together, for they felt that something must be done. Unto Aaron, Moses' brother, and the chief leader left in charge during Moses' absence (Ex. 24: 14). Aaron was a very different man from his brother Moses, as is shown by his actions in this time of need. He was not such a leader; he had not his spiritual power; he had not the masterful power of a right heart, a great conviction, a divine assurance. And the people felt thrown upon their own resources. Rightly used, this was an opportunity of growing in patience, in self-reliance, in strength of character, in obedience.

II. They Were Being Trained into Faith in an Unseen Spiritual God.—Up, make us gods, or a god, which shall go before us, and be our leader. They could not see God, and they wanted some visible expression of God. They had several manifestations of God,—the pillar of cloud and fire, the glory on the mountain, and the daily manna; but even these became so common that they did not make them realize the presence of God. They had just come from the land of idols, heathen gods everywhere. All these gods could be seen. They seemed real.

It was hard. It still is hard at times to make our God, our heavenly Father, real to us, though we are familiar with his wonder-working power through thousands of years, and see his works, material and spiritual, on every hand. These dark hours are our testing and training time, as this period was to the Israelites.

THERE WAS REAL DANGER which made them restless and fearful. They were alone in the wilderness. Enemies behind them in Egypt; enemies before them filled the land to which they were going; enemies in the desert might arise at any time and cut them off, as they had already been attacked by the Amalekites (Ex. 17: 8-13). For this Moses . . . we wot (know) not what is become of him. He may have perished in the flaming summit of the mountain. They had known him but a very short time, and now he had left them in the very heart of the wilderness, far from the promised land, like sheep without a shepherd.

THE ATTRACTIONS OF IDOLATRY were of no mean power. They were familiar with the way in which the idols of the heathen were worshiped, with feasting and rioting and unrestrained licentiousness, in marked contrast with the purity and self-control required by Jehovah.

III. The Breaking of Their Covenant by Making a Golden Calf.—Vs. 2-6.
2. And Aaron said unto them. He yielded to their importunity. Break off the



From a Photograph by Wilson.

"Aaron's Hill,"

or the Hill of the Golden Calf. A cone-shaped mountain of red and brown colored sandstone.

4. ¹ And he received ^{them} ^{it} at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, ^{after he had} ^{and} made it a molten calf: and they said, These ^{be} ^{be} thy gods, O Is'ra-el, which brought thee up out of the land of E'gypt.

5. And when Aar'on saw ^{it,} ^{this,} he built an altar before it; and Aar'on made ² proclamation, and said, ^{To-morrow is} ^{To-morrow shall be} a feast to the LORD.

¹ Ex. 20: 23; Deut. 9: 16; Psa. 106: 19; Acts 7: 41; Rom. 1: 23.

² Lev. 23: 2.



Egyptian Rings, Bracelets, Earrings, and Scarabæus.

this collected it (the gold) in a bag. The engraving might have been done after the image was cast, or it may have reference to carving the mold, which was to be covered with gold. They had seen calf or bull worship in Egypt; and the worship of the bull, generally winged and human-headed, may easily have been common over the region, spread from Nineveh, in the ruins of which many have been found. Champollion observes that the only painting of the bull Mnevis (at Heliopolis, near their Goshen home) yet discovered is colored *bright yellow*, evidently with the intention of representing a *golden image*. And they said, *These be thy gods, O Israel*. Rather, *thy god*. The idol was proclaimed as an image of the true God, as if the people would break the second commandment, but not the first. The winged and human-headed creatures "represented the combination of wisdom, strength, and omnipresence which characterizes divinity; and this combination might well have seemed to carnal minds no unapt symbol of Jehovah." — Rawlinson.

There was no intention of denying Jehovah as the true God. They did not realize what they were doing; that they were breaking their covenant with God, who alone could protect them, as he had done in the past.

In fact, this visible representation of God not only broke their covenant relations, but in itself was destructive of the power of the true God over them. It gave them false and belittling ideas of God, and thus decreased their faith and hope in him. It lowered their ideal. It made it easier to sin against him. Compare the effect upon yourself of the medieval sculptures and pictures which try to represent God in human form. So those that bow before crucifixes, images, paintings, relics, altars, shrines, plead that they do it as an aid to the worship of the true God; but their tendency is to lessen the value of worship as a spiritual power for training men in character and virtue.

5. And when Aaron saw it (this). Saw in what light the people viewed the image. He built an altar before it . . . and said, *To-morrow is a feast to the LORD*. God was still to be worshiped, but under the form of a calf. Probably Aaron thought he was very shrewd in thus saving for God what he could of honor and reverence.

So Jehu boasted of his zeal for the Lord of hosts while he was worshipping the golden calves of Jeroboam (2 Kings 10: 16, 29).

golden earrings, which they had begged from the Egyptians on their departure. The Egyptian rings, as seen on the monuments, were round, massy plates of metal. In the ears of your wives, etc. It cost them something to do wrong. Your sons. "Earrings are worn in the East almost as much by men as by women. Most Assyrian and some Egyptian monarchs are represented with them." — Rawlinson. You cannot have a golden calf without paying dearly for it.

Some think that Aaron proposed this plan in the hopes that the wives and daughters would resist, and the people refuse to give. He would thus escape from his dilemma, of either opposing the people or helping them to break God's law; or at least he could put the people off till Moses returned.

4. He . . . fashioned it with a graving tool. Many scholars translate

6. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the ¹people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

7. And the LORD ^{said} ^{spake} unto Mō'ses, ²Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest ^{up} out of the land of E'gypt, ³have corrupted ^{themselves:}

8. ^{They} ^{they} have turned aside quickly out of the way which ⁴I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed ^{thereunto,} ^{unto it,} and said, ⁵These ^{be} ^{be} thy gods, O Is'ra-el, which have brought thee up out of the land of E'gypt.

¹ 1 Cor. 10: 7.

² V. 1; Ex. 33: 1; Deut. 9: 12.

³ Gen. 6: 11; Deut. 4: 16.

⁴ Ex. 20: 3, 4; Deut. 9: 16.

⁵ 1 Kings 12: 28.

6. They rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, for their religious worship, such as it was. And the people sat down to eat and to drink, according to the custom not only of heathen feasts, but of the great festivals God ordained for the Jews. A part of the animals sacrificed was used for burning on the altar, and the rest used for family feasting. And rose up to play. "The 'play' included dancing of an indecent kind." — *Ellicott*.

IV. By the Sudden Appearance of Moses on the Scene. — Vs. 7-18. The incense and song that rose from the scene were far from being a "sweet savor unto the Lord."

7. The LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down. Moses in the thick cloud which covered the top of Sinai could not see or hear what was going on below. But it was no time for him to remain apart, even in communion with God; there was work to do below, which his mountain-top experience fitted him to do. So the three disciples who viewed the Transfiguration were not allowed to remain on the Mount, but were sent down to their daily work where the others were in vain trying to cure a demon-controlled boy.

To test him, God offered to destroy the nation and make Moses the second Abraham of a new and greater people. Moses stood the test, rejected the tempting offer, and urged upon God three pleas for mercy. Moses hastened down the mountainside, with Joshua, who had been waiting for him. Soon they came in sight of the abominable idol, and the frenzied worshipers dancing, half naked, around it. Probably there was a power not only in his soul, but in his appearance, — some gleams of that glory described in Ex. 34: 35.

"They gazed and looked, and lo, on brow and face,

A glory and a brightness not of earth,
The eye lit up with fire of heavenly birth,
The whole man bright with beams of God's
great grace."

— E. H. Plumptre.

In the presence of the people Moses threw down the tables of stone, the permanent record of their covenant with God, and broke them on the rocks beneath, as a visible expression and symbol of the fact that they had broken the covenant on which all their hope depended.



The Golden Calf.

30. And it came to pass on the morrow, that Mō'ses said unto the people, ¹Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the LORD; ²peradventure I shall ³make ^{an} atonement for your sin.

¹ 1 Sam. 12 : 20; Luke 15 : 18.² 2 Sam. 16 : 12.³ Num. 25 : 13.

Then Moses spoke face to face with Aaron: "What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?"

AARON'S DEFENCE was mean in that he blamed the people, and false in that his literally true assertion that he cast the jewels into the fire, "and there came out this calf," was "a curious, ingenious, but transparent lie."

Phillips Brooks in his volume of *Sermons Preached in English Churches* has a fine sermon on this answer of Aaron, "The Fire and the Calf," in which he shows how apt we are to blame the furnace for what we do ourselves. The brutish, sensual man lays the blame of his actions on his circumstances and bad company. The dishonest business man lays the blame on business customs and necessities; the worshiper of the golden calf upon his worldly surroundings; the neglecter of religion, upon his too strict training. "Everywhere there is this cowardly casting off of responsibilities upon dead circumstances." They continually say, I cast it into the fire and there came out this calf.

Compare Pilate washing his hands and laying the blame on the people, and Macbeth who tries to soothe his conscience with:

"If chance will have me king, why chance may crown me
Without my stir."

V. By Their Punishment. — 1. The breaking of the tables of the covenant was enough to cause the stoutest heart to fear.

2. Moses then burned the golden calf, and ground it to powder. "It is almost impossible to pulverize pure gold, but the act was made easily possible, probably, by alloys present in the jewelry from which the idol had been made." — *Patterson Du Bois* in *Sunday School Times*. The Israelites were then compelled to "swallow their sin," for Moses scattered the dust of the idol on the only water which the people had to drink (Deut. 9: 21). This act also was a symbol, exhibiting the powerlessness of the idol and the pervasiveness of their sin. Josiah, centuries afterward, gave the nation a similar objection (2 Kings 23: 6, 12).

3. Then Moses put the question, "Who is on the Lord's side?" Who will stand for the right, whatever their past mistakes, whoever else may refuse? "Who is on the Lord's side?" is the question put to all souls in great test hours. On the Lord's side, even against yourselves, when yourselves need cleansing." — *Mrs. A. D. T. Whitney*. We must all admire the boldness of Moses, one man against a nation. "Let him who has been before the face of God show that he does not fear the face of man." — *Oosterzee*. Those who were brave and true could catch the fire of Moses' courage.

Moses set these men to be executioners of those who refused. Only a few hours before Moses had been interceding with God for the people. "He himself," says Chadwick, "felt it needful to cut deep, in mercy, and doubtless in wrath as well, for true affection is not limp and nerveless." The greatness of the punishment measured to the people the awfulness of the sin. Furthermore, it must be remembered that not a man need have been slain; all could have accepted Moses' summons, "Who is on the Lord's side?" and have found pardon.

VI. By Intercession and Forgiveness. — Vs. 30-35. 30. And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin. Not all the guilty, therefore, had been slain, but only the leaders in the idolatry. And Moses meant for the others to understand that, though they were spared, they were still under God's dread displeasure. And now I will go up unto the LORD. "What!" Aaron may have exclaimed, "leave the people now, of all times, just after they have shown how fickle they are?" "Yes," answers the great leader, "for it is not I that am leading, it is God; and the more fearful and unexpected the difficulty, the more need of retiring to seek orders from him." Peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin, as expressed in v. 32. He was willing to die if the nation might be saved thereby. This was one of the appeals that touch the heart, to have a good man voluntarily suffer for our sins.

31. And Mō'ses ¹returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have ²made them gods of gold.

32. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin —; and if not, ³blot me, I pray thee, ⁴out of thy book which thou hast written.

33. And the LORD said unto Mō'ses, ⁵Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.

34. ^{Therefore} ^{And} now go, lead the people unto *the place* of which I have spoken unto thee: ⁶behold, mine ^{Angel} ^{angel} shall go before thee: nevertheless ⁷in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them.

35. And the LORD ^{plagued} ^{smote} the people, because ⁸they made the calf which Aar'on made.

¹ Deut. 9: 18.

² Ex. 20: 23.

³ Psal. 69: 28; Rom. 9: 3.

⁴ Psal. 56: 8; Phil. 4: 3.

⁵ Lev. 23: 30; Ezek. 18: 4.

⁶ Ex. 33: 2, 14; Num. 20: 16.

⁷ Deut. 32: 35; Rom. 2: 5, 6.

⁸ 2 Sam. 12: 9; Acts 7: 41.

Having returned to the mount, he prayed for his people. 32. **If thou wilt forgive their sin** — if it be possible, and the words stop there as if he felt that the request was too great to ask. **And if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.** Compare Psal. 139: 16; 56: 8; Rev. 20: 12. Not probably the book of eternal life, but the roll-call of his people, the book in which was written the history of his life as God had planned it, the book of remembrance. Let me be as if I had not been. Let me fail of all my hopes and labors. So Paul (Rom. 9: 3) was willing that his name might be erased from the book of eternal life (Psal. 69: 28; Rev. 3: 5), if only his people might be saved. "Does it not seem as if Israel were borne upon the wings of prayer, by all the most illustrious men of God, over successive abysses?" (Samuel, Hezekiah, Isaiah, Daniel, etc.).

33. **And the LORD said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.** "The soul that sinneth, *it* shall die" (Ezek. 18: 4). That is, those who refuse to obey God's law, who turn from his commandments, who choose darkness instead of light, in spite of all that God can do for them, — these cannot be on the roll of his true children of the members of his kingdom.

34. **Now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee.** At the burning bush (Ex. 3: 8) God had told Moses where he was to lead the Hebrews. **Behold, mine Angel shall go before thee.** Some celestial subordinate, possibly his symbol of cloud and fire, but without direct communication and communion with God, his conscious presence. Read in Exodus 33 how Moses won from God a renewed promise of his personal presence. **Nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them.** "The weary waiting in the wilderness for forty years may have been a part of the punishment." — *Rawlinson*. The Jews have a tradition that *at least one ounce* of the powder of the golden calf has been mingled in each of their later calamities. God knows when to punish.

"Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience he stands waiting, with exactness grinds he all."

— *Longfellow*.

35. **And the LORD plagued the people, because they made the calf.** Some think he sent a pestilence. More likely, this refers to the slaughter already described or to the later disasters of the nation.

VII. **By the Covenant Renewed.** — The remainder of the book of Exodus shows how the covenant was renewed with the people (Ex. 34: 10, 27, 28). Their duties were again set before them, and the tables of the covenant renewed. Then the tabernacle was built according to directions, and the Shekinah rested upon it.

The most interesting part of this renewal is the answer to Moses' request that he might see God in his glory. The full request could not be granted, for "thou canst not see my face: for man shall not see me and live"; but he showed him his lesser, shaded, reflected glory (Ex. 34: 23).

“And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy” (Ex. 34: 19).

This glory we all can see, if we open our eyes, reflected through all the history of God's people from the earliest days to Christ, and thence down the ages, in the wonderful things God has wrought, and the growth of his kingdom.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

When Cyrus the Great desired to enlist the Persian warriors to join in his plans, he assembled the army on a certain day and place, and provided each with an axe. He marched them into the forest, and made them toil all day in cutting down trees, with coarse food and little rest. The next day he brought them to a great banquet, with abundant meat and rich wines in profusion, and bade them feast and be merry. They enjoyed it all the more after the hard fare of the previous day, and joined in merry songs and tales and dances. At evening Cyrus called them together, and asked which service they liked best. Then he said to them, “If you follow me, you will enjoy ease, abundance, and luxury. If you refuse, you must toil on in privations and hardships as you do now, and so end your days.” — Condensed from Abbott's *Cyrus the Great*.

So the Lord has put before us in the story of this lesson the contrast of THE WORSHIP OF GOD AND THE WORSHIP OF THE GOLDEN CALF.

WORSHIP OF THE GOLDEN CALF. “Have we made any calves? Ah, many. We have been great at idol-making. Can I count the calves we have worshiped? the unholy catalogue: Pride, Fashion, Gluttony, Self-Indulgence, Wealth, Station, Influence, Appearances, — all calves of our making, calves of gold.” — *Joseph Parker*. Whatever we make first in our heart's love, that is our God. That to which we sacrifice precious things is our God. Whosoever gives up God's commandments, or right, or honor, or truth, or character, or usefulness, for the sake of any gain or of attaining any end, is an idolater.

Never think, when you take a start in idol-worship, that you will stop there. The idol must have an altar. The altar must have an offering. The whole must have a temple. Every sin is self-perpetuating. Begin to love money more than God, and the great idol of mammon will soon make a temple of your life.

The consequences of loving anything more than we love God are deadly. The character deteriorates; the conscience destroys peace; the allurements and attractions fade into horrors; plagues come; we fail of God's guidance; the idol is destroyed and nothing takes its place.

“Ashes always fly back in the face of him who throws them.”

Therefore, let us repent, and renew our covenant with God, and place ourselves in his guidance, enrolled among his people.

THE WORSHIP OF GOD brings blessings without number: his presence with us; his guidance through the wilderness of life safely to the promised land; his power and protection; the vision of his goodness and mercy; a heart and life shining like the face of Moses.

“The soul is like a curious chamber with elastic walls, which can be expanded, with God as its guest, illimitably, but which, without God, shrinks and shrivels until every vestige of the divine is gone.” — *Henry Drummond* in *Natural Law*.

LESSON V. — August 4.

THE TABERNACLE. — Exodus 40: 1-13, 34-38.

READ Exodus 35-40. COMMIT vs. 34, 35.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.* — Ex. 40: 34.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

From the various notices of the tabernacle study its form, its various parts, and contents. Exodus 25-27, 36-40; Hebrews 9; Num. 4: 5-15.

Its meaning and figurative use: 2 Cor. 5: 1; Heb. 8: 2-6; 9: 1-12; 2 Pet. 1: 13; Rev. 21: 3.

Its history: Ex. 25: 9, 40; Heb. 8: 5;

Ex. 40: 17-33; Num. 2: 17; Josh. 18: 1; 1 Sam. 21: 1-6; 1 Chron. 16: 39; 2 Chron.

1: 3-6; 5: 5 compared with 1: 3, 5, 6, and 1 Kings 8: 4.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

This lesson can best be taught as an object-lesson, either with pictures or a model, like that of Grace Saxe (see "Reference Library"). Or the scholars can themselves draw the outlines as the teacher directs.

Show not only how the tabernacle as a whole, but each part naturally expresses the great truth it was intended to teach.

At the same time place beside it in imagination, and apply its teachings to the Christian institutions, the church in which God dwells, and the heart which God loves to make his tabernacle among men.

In this way great life-truths can be made clear and impressive to the younger scholars.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The Tabernacle, Its History and Structure, by the Rev. W. Shaw Caldecott, member of the Royal Asiatic Society (Union Press, Philadelphia, 1904); interesting and original, with cuts. Dr. Kennedy in *Hastings' Bible Dictionary* gives not only a critical study, but excellent applications. Dr. Brown's *The Tabernacle* (1899). Westcott's *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, especially "Additional Notes" to chapter viii., and essay in Appendix. *Panorama of the Tabernacle and Its Services and Christ in the Tabernacle*, by Frank White (London, S. W. Partridge & Co.). *A Chart of the Tabernacle*, 4 by 2½ ft., beautifully colored, Mfs. Cora M. Stevens, St. Louis. "Tabernacle-Building," in F. B. Meyer's *Moses, the Servant of God*. Randall's *The Wonderful Tent* (\$2.00, Robert Clark, Cincinnati). Otley's *Aspects of the Old Testament*, p. 261, "The symbolical significance," etc. *Model of the Tabernacle*, by Grace Saxe (\$1.25; Gospel Pub. House, West 22nd. Street, New York).

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture*. "Spinning in the Wilderness," by Mary Rowles, in *The Poet's Bible* (Ward, Lock & Bowden). "Sonnets on the Types," by Richard Wilton, in *Lyrics Sylvan and Sacred*. George Herbert's poem, "Aaron." Milton's *Paradise Lost*, XII. 244-260.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Oh! worship the King all glorious above."
"O thou whose own vast temple stands,"
"O Lord of hosts whose glory fills."

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

A description of the tabernacle.
What was its teaching purpose?
The furnishing of the tabernacle.
Its moral teachings.
Why was so much money expended on the tabernacle?
What is the moral value of religious buildings and institutions?

LEARN BY HEART.

V. 34; Psa. 84: 1-4, 10, 11.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—The work on the tabernacle was begun in the seventh month from the Exodus, and completed during the remainder of the year. The tabernacle was dedicated on the first day of the new year, on the first of Abib (called also Nisan), B. C. 1490—the latter part of March or early in April.

Place.—The plain, Er-Râhah, at the foot of Mount Sinai. The wilderness.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

I will try to love and worship God with all my heart, and aid the institutions of true religion.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Training by the Institutions of Religion.

I. THE TABERNACLE (vs. 1, 2).

1. Preparations.
2. The court.
3. The tent of meeting.
4. The over tent. The tabernacle.
5. The furnishings.
6. The situation.

II. THE SPIRITUAL MEANING OF THE TABERNACLE.

1. Value of religious institutions.
2. Divine origin and authority.
3. Its central position.
4. Progress and adaptation.
5. God dwelling with men.
6. God speaks with man.
7. Holiness of God.
8. Gradual progress and education of the soul.

III. THE FURNISHINGS AND THEIR TEACHINGS (Exodus 3-13, 34-38).

The ark the supreme end.
The altar. Laver. Candlestick. Table of shewbread.
Altar of incense. Priestly service. God's visible presence.

I. The Tabernacle. — Vs. 1, 2. There are not a few difficulties in the way of obtaining an accurate idea of the form and construction of the tabernacle, from the descriptions given; as is usual in all attempts to realize a description. Even the form of so simple a thing as the golden candlestick it was impossible to copy in brass from the description given till the model was found in the triumphal arch of Titus at Rome pictured among the treasures he brought from Jerusalem after its destruction.

Those who wish to enter upon this discussion can consult *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, article, "Tabernacle." But for all practical purposes in the Sunday school the general conclusions are sufficient.

FIRST. PREPARATIONS. The first step toward the building of the tabernacle was the giving of gifts (Ex. 25: 1-9). (1) A great variety was called for, and those that were too poor to give jewels, gold, silver, or bronze could give spices, oil, skins, or linen, or help cut the boards. There is room in God's house and about his tasks for all persons and all degrees of talent. (2) The gifts were willing ones, from the heart (Ex. 25: 2). Indeed,

after the people's great sin and forgiveness they gave more than enough, and had to be restrained from giving (Ex. 35: 21, 29; 36: 5-7). It was a thanksgiving offering. Besides this there was a consecration of the best talents and skill for the work. Men were filled with the spirit of God for this daily material work (Ex. 31: 1-6). The best work in material things in the business side of religious work is done by men who are as consecrated and as filled with God's spirit and love as are those who preach the gospel.

"And the workers' hearts grew tender
In this glad some self-surrender,
And the dreary toil of bondage, which their souls had so
abhorred,

Was forgotten in the splendor
Of this service for the Lord!"

— Mary Rowles.

THE LAMP OF SACRIFICE is "the spirit which offers precious things simply because they are precious; some external sign of love and obedience and surrender of themselves and theirs to his will, of gratitude and honor to him, and continual remembrance of him." — From Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture*.

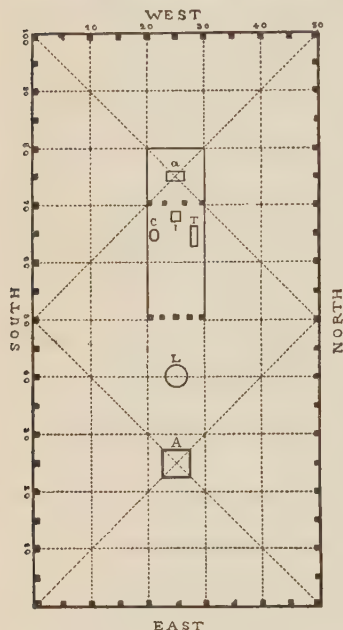
SECOND. THE COURT was a level place enclosed by a screen of pillars and linen curtains. The enclosure was 100 cubits (150 feet) long, and 50 cubits (75 feet) wide, equal to two squares of 50 cubits each. Pillars 5 cubits (7½ feet) high were placed in bronze sockets 5 cubits apart, twenty each on the north and south sides, and ten each on the east and west. On these pillars were hung long white curtains of fine-twined linen of a uniform height of 5 cubits; two of them were 100 cubits long; one 50 cubits for the west end; two were 15 cubits for the extremities of the east end, while the intervening 20 cubits were closed by six portieres embroidered in shades of purple on a white ground, for the entrance. The

pillars were kept in position by cords fastened to bronze pins stuck in the ground.

We can understand this best by the accompanying diagram, similar to one given in *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*. This diagram will also show the situation and arrangement of the tabernacle and the furnishings for worship.

THIRD. THE TENT OF MEETING, THE DWELLING where God met man and declared his will.

This was a tent with wooden walls, 30 cubits (45 feet) long by 10 cubits (15 feet) wide; situated in the rear square of the court, with its front entrance on the middle dividing line between the two squares of the court. See diagram.



Plan of the Tabernacle.

Scale 1-32 inch to a cubit.

A — Brazen altar } in the court.

L — Laver

C — Golden candlestick.

T — Table of shewbread.

I — Golden altar of incense in Holy Place.

a — Ark in Holy of Holies.

1. And the LORD spake unto Mō'ses, saying,
2. On the first day of the ¹first month shalt thou ^{set rear} up ²the tabernacle of the tent of ^{the congregation.}
^{meeting.}

¹ Ex. 12: 2.² V. 17; Ex. 26: 1, 30.

The walls were made of boards 15 feet high and 27 inches wide; either solid boards, or, as Dr. Kennedy thinks, a framework of that width, set into silver bases. These were held together by three series of rods, one at the top, one at the middle, and one near the base.

The framework thus made was covered with great tapestry curtains woven with mystic figures of cherubim in violet, purple, and scarlet. The eastern end opening into the court was hung with tapestry portieres for the entrance. Over the first covering for protection was thrown a covering of goat's hair.

The Tent of Meeting was divided into two portions by portieres, the front room being an oblong, 10 cubits by 20, called the Holy Place; while the innermost room was a perfect cube, 10 cubits on each side.

FOURTH. A LARGE TENT was placed over this Tent of Meeting, probably running over a ridge-pole and held in place by strong cords, something like a huge A tent.

2. On the first day of the first month. "The New Year's Day of the first year of freedom." — *Rawlinson*. See "Time." Shalt thou set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation. The tabernacle here includes the whole building and its courts, just as we use the word temple sometimes in its larger meaning, and sometimes limit it to the temple proper.

FIFTH. THE FURNISHINGS. We need now to take a general view of the contents of the tabernacle, leaving each article to be considered in detail later. Refer to the diagram.

In the center of the square court in front of the tent was the great brazen altar for burnt sacrifice. Moving toward the tent, we come to the great laver, 15 feet in front of its portiere entrance.

Entering the tent, we find the golden candlestick, the only source of light, for there were no windows, the table of shewbread, and the golden altar of incense.

In the Holy of Holies was only the ark of the testimony or witness containing the tables of the law.

SIXTH. THE SITUATION. When the tribes were encamped, the tabernacle was the central point of the encampment in a huge square; three tribes were on the north, three on the south, three east, and three west. Within this square was another occupied by the priests and Levites.

II. The Spiritual Meaning of the Tabernacle. FIRST. VALUE OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS. At all times there is need of visible expressions and manifestations of the unseen spiritual things to help even the most educated, cultured, and holy men to realize the unseen God and character and life. So through nature we understand God and keep him in mind, as nearly all we know of the sun is revealed to us by the reflection of its rays on material particles in the air. So the institutions of religion are "the shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. 8: 5). Still more were these institutions necessary in the early education of man. So the great churches and cathedrals of the ages when few could read and write are filled with pictures and carvings of the Bible story.

Thus the tabernacle was the means of training the people who had just come out of Egypt in religious truth and religious life. There is no place for the tabernacle except under Moses at the very beginning of Jewish national history.

The same teaching is needed by each of us, and especially by children. The institutions of religion, the church buildings, and all the rooms and means for worship and study are essential to the best religious life. "Without the temple," says George Adam Smith, "the continuity of Israel's religion could not be maintained." No community can long prosper which gives its time to material things, and neglects the spiritual; which builds beautiful dwellings, but neglects its schoolhouses and churches. The buildings which represent and cultivate the higher nature should be the noblest and best in the community.

SECOND. THESE INSTITUTIONS WERE DIVINE, to give them authority. The tabernacle and all associated with it were divine, exactly adapted to their purpose. In a far higher sense than "the hand that rounded Peter's dome" Moses

"Wrought in a sad sincerity —
Himself from God he could not free.
He builded better than he knew;
The conscious stone to beauty grew.

"These temples grew as grows the grass;
Art might obey, but not surpass;
The passive master lent his hand
To the vast soul that o'er him planned."
— R. W. Emerson.

3. And ¹ thou shalt put therein the ark of the testimony, and ^{cover} the ark with the ^{veil.} ^{screen} ^{veil.} ^{thou shalt}
4. And ² thou shalt bring in the table, and ³ set in order ^a the things that are ^{to be set in order} upon it; ⁴ and thou shalt bring in the candlestick, and light the lamps thereof.
5. ⁵ And thou shalt set the ^{altar of gold} ^{golden altar} for the incense before the ark of the testimony, and put the ^{hanging} ^{screen} of the door to the tabernacle.
6. And thou shalt set the altar of the ^{the} burnt offering before the door of the tabernacle of the tent of ^{the congregation.} ^{meeting.}

¹ V. 21; Ex. 26: 33; Num. 4: 5.

² V. 22; Ex. 26: 35.

³ V. 23; Ex. 25: 30; Lev. 24: 5, 6.

⁴ Vs. 24, 25.

⁵ V. 26.

^a Hebrew, *the order thereof.*

THIRD. THE POSITION of the tabernacle was in the center of the whole encampment, around which all life gathered; and according to its movements the whole people moved in their journeys through the wilderness.

RELIGION is the soul of a nation and the fountain of its prosperity. That which inspires new and pure motives, that which awakens the soul, and also guides and controls men, that which gives them something worthy to live for, — cannot but control the destiny of a nation. Carlyle says that “in every sense, a man’s religion is the chief fact with regard to him. A man’s or a nation of men’s.”

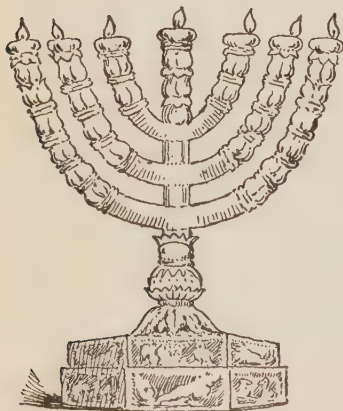
FOURTH. While institutions are necessary to the training of man, there is often an adaptation of them to the growth and development of man, as the tabernacle gave way to the grander and completer temple, and that to the Christian church.

FIFTH. THE RULING CONCEPTION of the tabernacle was that of Jehovah dwelling in visible glory in the sanctuary in the midst of his people (Ex. 25: 8; 29: 46). He manifested himself in light, showing that all the wonderful things done for them came from him. He was with them, their God even in every-day affairs. This is shown most clearly to us by his Son, Jesus Christ, whose character and deeds were living examples of God’s character and deeds toward us.

SIXTH. It taught that God spoke to man, that we can become acquainted with our heavenly Father, can pray to him, can cast all our care upon him, can listen to his Word in his Book, in his Son, and in our inmost souls.

SEVENTH. It taught the holiness of God, in infinite perfection, as the ideal we are all to seek, the end and purpose of life.

EIGHTH. It taught the gradual progress of the soul toward God; step by step we move Godward and heavenward, each stage more precious as we draw near to him. There is a fourfold teaching of the gradual education. (1) The movement is from the camp to the priests’ square, then to the court of the tabernacle, to the Holy Place, to the Holy of Holies. (2) The progression is from the bronze of the outer court, to the silver of the tent, to the gold of its candlestick and altar. (3) From the linen curtains of the outer court to the embroidery of its portieres, to the tapestry of the curtains of the tent. (4) From the symbolism of the furniture of the court and of the tent, as described below.



The Golden Candlestick.
Copied from the Arch of Titus.

“Build thee more stately mansions,
Oh, my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outworn shell by life’s unresting sea.”
— O. W. Holmes.

III. The Furnishings. — Vs. 3-13, 34-38.
THE ARK OF THE TESTIMONY or witness, contain-

7. And ¹ thou shalt set the laver between the tent of ^{the congregation meeting} and the altar, and shalt put water therein.

8. And thou shalt set up the court round about, and hang up the ^{hanging at the court gate.} screen of the gate of the court.

9. And thou shalt take the anointing oil, and ² anoint the tabernacle, and all that ^{is} therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the ^{vessels} furniture thereof: and it shall be holy.

10. And thou shalt anoint the altar of ^{the burnt offering,} and all ^{his} ^{its} vessels, and sanctify the altar: and ^{it shall be an altar} ^{the altar shall be} ^a most holy.

11. And thou shalt anoint the laver and ^{his foot,} ^{its base,} and sanctify it.

12. ⁴ And thou shalt bring Aar'on and his sons unto the door of the ^{tabernacle of the congregation,} ^{tent of meeting,} and ^{thou shalt} wash them with water.

13. And thou shalt put upon Aar'on the holy garments: ⁵ and ^{thou shalt} anoint him, and sanctify him: that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

¹ V. 30; Ex. 30: 18.

² Ex. 30: 26.

³ Ex. 29: 36, 37.

⁴ Lev. 8: 1-13.

⁵ Ex. 28: 41.

a Hebrew, holiness of holinesses.

ing the tables of the law, the covenant between God and man, and the witness to the obedience of man. The ark was a chest of shittim wood, overlaid with gold within and without, 3 feet 9 inches long, 2 feet 3 inches broad and deep.

Over it was the mercy seat of gold, upon which were the cherubim, perhaps "a symbolical representation of the redeemed."

This was the central object of the tabernacle, the place of God's presence, reached only by a heart that loves and obeys God's law, and through his loving mercy in forgiving and cleansing. This expresses the character and the heaven we are all seeking.

It may be easier to teach this lesson if we start where an Israelite must start, and where all must start in reaching the final goal of the Holy of Holies.

THE ALTAR (v. 10). Entering through the portieres of the court, on the east, we first come to the altar of sacrifice, of wood protected from fire by bronze. It was 7½ feet square. It symbolized the need of sacrifice for sin, for some atoning power.

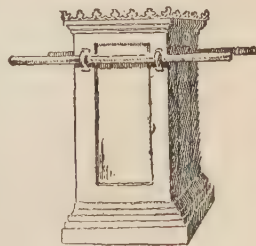
THE LAVER (v. 7). Moving directly toward the tent, we come to the bronze laver, a huge urn rising from a pedestal. It was for cleansing those who entered the sacred tent, and symbolized the necessity of moral cleansing before one can enter the Holy Place. "Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow."

THE CANDLESTICK (v. 4). Entering thus forgiven and purified into the Holy Place, we come at the farther end to the candlestick. This was a seven-branched lampstand made of a talent (65 lbs. Troy) of pure gold. It was the only light. It symbolized the true, sanctified people of God, letting their light shine, themselves fed by the Spirit of God, the source of all light. "Ye are the light of the world," said Christ, and St. John in the Revelation pictures the churches as the candlesticks bearing the light of Christ.

THE TABLE OF SHEWBLEAD (v. 4). Opposite, on the north side, to the right, as one faced the Holy of Holies, was a gold-plated table on which were placed the twelve loaves of bread in two golden dishes. It was 3 feet long, 18 inches broad, and 27 inches high. Mention is made (Ex. 25: 29) of "flagons and bowls," which were for the wine that always accompanied a meal offering.



Ark of the Covenant.



Altar of Incense.

14. And thou shalt bring his sons, and clothe them with coats :
put coats upon them :
34. ¹ Then ^a the cloud covered the tent of the congregation,
meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.
35. And Mō'ses ² was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation,
meeting, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle.
36. ³ And when the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the children of Is'ra-el ^a went onward, in throughout all their journeys :
37. ^{But} ^{but} ⁴ if the cloud were not taken up, then they journeyed not till the day that it was taken up.
38. For ⁵ the cloud of the LORD was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was on it
there was fire therein by night, in the sight of all the house of Is'ra-el, throughout all their journeys.

¹ Ex. 29 : 43 ; Lev. 16 : 2 ; Num. 9 : 15.² Lev. 16 : 2 ; 2 Chron. 5 : 14.³ Num. 9 : 17 ; Neh. 9 : 19.⁴ Num. 9 : 19-22.⁵ Ex. 13 : 21 ; Num. 9 : 15.^a Hebrew, *journeyed*.

The bread typified that we need our daily spiritual bread in order to grow good and to be fitted for God's service as much as we need daily bread for our bodies. The healthy soul is full of hungers and thirsts, and every one of them needs the food that satisfies them. The soul that does not hunger is sickly, as is the body without appetite. Jesus Christ satisfies all these hungers.

THE GOLDEN ALTAR OF INCENSE (v. 6) stood just before the entrance to the Holy of Holies. It was 18 inches square and 3 feet high. The fragrance of incense, its preciousness, and its beautiful clouds rising to heaven make it a suitable symbol for prayer and thanksgiving, the means of communion with God.

After the experiences typified by these objects, one can meet God in the Holy of Holies and live according to the laws of his covenant, as near to heaven as it is possible to be on earth.

THE PRIESTLY SERVICE (vs. 12, 13). Even the priests must be cleansed and anointed with oil as set apart for God's special service.

GOD'S VISIBLE PRESENCE (vs. 34-38). The shining cloud came to show that God was with them, a consuming fire to the wrong-doer, but a Glory and Guide, Defender, Redeemer, and Friend.

LESSON VI. — August 11.

THE SIN OF NADAB AND ABIHU. — Leviticus 10: 1-11.

A TEMPERANCE LESSON.

READ Leviticus 8-10. COMMIT v. 9.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.* — PROV. 20: 1.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Bring together all the statements of the Bible concerning intemperance, and from	the facts gathered decide what is its teaching concerning the use of intoxicating liquors.
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HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

An officer in our civil war saw one of the soldiers lying down in the rear during a battle, and said to him, "What are you doing here? Up into the ranks!" "Colonel,"

answered the soldier, "I am out of ammunition. This fellow is dead, and I am putting some of his cartridges in my box." "All right," said the officer; "load up and take your place."

The most effective temperance teaching is ammunition from those who have failed in life through intemperance. Their story is like the guideboard of warning which Christian and Hopeful set up at the entrance to the path to the dungeon of Giant Despair.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Leviticus, Expositor's Bible, Pulpit Commentary, The Book of Leviticus, new translation printed in colors, in Haupt's *Polychrome* series (\$1.25, Dodd, Mead & Co.).

Books on Temperance. Gustafson's *Foundation of Death. The Temperance Problem and Social Reform*, by Rowntree and Sherwell (\$2.00, Whittaker), is a comprehensive review of the reform all over the world. *Facts about the Temperance Reform*, a useful pamphlet by Rev. William Parsons, Peoria, Ill. *Temperance Investigations by the Committee of Fifty* (Houghton & Mifflin).

Keble's *Nadab and Abihu*, "Away or e'er the the Lord break forth."

AGELESS HYMN.

"The Light of Truth is Breaking," written by Mrs. Howe in the meter and to the tune of her "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Sign the pledge.

1. And ¹Nā'dāb and A-bī'hū, the sons of Aar'on, ²took ^{either} of them his censor, and put fire therein, and ^{put} ^{laid} incense thereon, and offered ³strange fire before the LORD, which he ^{had not} commanded them. ^{not.}

¹ Lev. 16: 1; Num. 3: 3, 4.

² Lev. 16: 12; Num. 16: 18.

³ Ex. 30: 9.

I. The Situation. — Everything was nearly prepared for the onward march toward the promised land. There had been nearly a year of instruction and training in the wilderness experiences and at Sinai. The tabernacle had been set up on the first day of the first month. The priests had been prepared and trained in their duty of leading the people in true worship. In forty days, the twentieth of the second month, they were to break up their long encampment and begin their journey (Ex. 40: 17; Lev. 9: 1; Num. 10: 11-13). The moral law had been given. The ritual law had been announced and taught. The divine fire shone over the Holy of Holies, like the sun, — light, peace, comfort, brightness, beauty, life to those who use it aright, but a consuming fire to those who despise and misuse its power. The divine fire had kindled the fuel on the altar; a perpetual flame (Lev. 6: 13) "to be continually fed with the fuel especially provided by the congregation, and with the daily burnt offerings." "Tradition assures us that it never was quenched till the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar." — *Dr. Ginsburg*. The ceremonial of religion as appointed by God, to continue as the best method of worship and religious education of the people, was begun.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: A Tragedy Caused by Strong Drink.

I. THE SITUATION.

II. THE TRAGIC STORY OF TWO YOUNG MEN OF GREAT PROMISE (vs. 1-7).

Their opportunity.

Their sin.

The tragic death.

The necessity of the punishment.

III. THE CAUSE OF THE TRAGEDY (vs. 9-11).

Intemperance.

IV. THE TEMPERANCE LESSONS.

LEARN BY HEART.

V. 9; 1 Cor. 3: 16, 17.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — April, B. C. 1490 (common chronology); on the afternoon (Lev. 10: 12, 19) of the first day that the priests entered upon the regular sacrifices of the tabernacle (Lev. 8: 33; 9: 1), eight days after the completion of the tabernacle, our last lesson. Nearly a year after the exodus.

Place. — In the tabernacle near Sinai.

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The circumstances.

Nadab and Abihu.

What was their opportunity for the future?

What was the sin that ruined them?

From what can you infer that they committed it under the influence of wine?

Why was their punishment so severe?

What temperance lessons do you find in this story?

II. The Tragic Story of Two Young Men of Great Promise. — Vs. 1-7. **THEIR OPPORTUNITY.** 1. Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron. His eldest sons (Ex. 6: 23), just inducted into the exalted office of priests, next to their father, the high priest, in the line of succession to the highest office of religious leadership and influence in the nation. A glorious opportunity was before them.

They had passed through three great portals of usefulness and happiness. (1) Their parentage was a fine advantage. Moses was their uncle. Their exalted family had given them great privilege of association with the best in the nation. (2) Their *education* was remarkable. They had spent a year in God's wilderness training school, receiving the lessons of the riven rock, the quails, the manna, the law written on the tables of stone. Moreover, they had had the exalted privilege of beholding with their own eyes the glory of God upon the holy mount (Ex. 24: 1, 9, 10). (3) They had passed through the portal of a glorious *calling*. They had been dedicated to a sacred and most honorable trust. They wore the garments that separated them, in the eyes of all men, to the priest's life of holiness and obedience. Before each of them was even the thrilling possibility of becoming high priest some day.

THEIR SIN. These young men stood either in the court in front of the tabernacle or just within its outer enclosure, the Holy Place where was the altar of incense. **Took either of them his censer.** The censer was "the vessel used to carry the charcoal on which the incense was burned, a bowl-shaped implement furnished with a short handle." — *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*. **And put fire therein.** The coals should have been taken from the altar of burnt offering. **And put incense thereon.** The sacred incense, of a special composition (Ex. 30: 34-38), to be used only for the tabernacle service. It symbolized adoration and prayer. **And offered strange fire.** "Strange, that is, to the requirements of the law." — *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*. Coals from some other source than the divinely kindled fire of the great altar (Lev. 9: 24) from which the fire was to be taken as a symbol of truths most essential to the religious training of the people. This they offered **before the LORD** in direct and public defiance of his own command. **Which he commanded them not.** Had forbidden them to do. "While it is not easy to prove that to light the incense at the altar fire was an invariable custom, yet it is certain that it was commanded for the great Day of Atonement (Lev. 16: 12), and again in connection with the plague following the rebellion of Korah (Num. 16: 46), so that, perhaps, this is not unlikely to have been one element, at least, in their offence. . . . In any case the gravamen of their sin is expressed in these words; they offered 'fire which the Lord had not commanded them'; offered it either in a *way* not commanded, or at a *time* not commanded, or in a *place* not commanded (as some have supposed that they rashly pressed within the veil into the immediate presence of the Shekinah glory of God): or perhaps in each and all these ways." — *Expositor's Bible*.



From Calmet.

Habit of a Priest.

With censer and incense burner.

That the brothers may have entered into the Holy of Holies is made probable by the fact that the prohibition of entrance within the veil for any one except the high priest, and for him on all days except once a year on the Day of Atonement, followed, as if suggested by, "the death of the two sons of Aaron when they offered ('drew near,' R. V.) before the Lord, and died" (Lev. 16: 1).

Their sin was a direct, public, inexcusable disobedience to their God and Leader. It partook of the nature of treason. They doubtless did it thoughtlessly, but there are occasions when thoughtlessness is a crime.

THE TRAGEDY. 2. **And there went out fire from the LORD,** from the Shekinah resting on the tabernacle (Ex. 40: 34, 38). **And devoured them,** destroyed them.

2. And there ¹ went out fire from ^{came forth} before the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

3. Then Mō'ses said unto Aar'on, This ^{is it} that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them ^{is it} that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be ^{is it} glorified. ^{is it} And Aar'on held his peace.

4. And Mō'ses called Mish'a-el and El'za-phān, the sons of ^{is it} Uz'zī-el the uncle of Aar'on, and said unto them, ^{Come Draw} near, ^{is it} carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp.

5. So they ^{went drew} near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Mō'ses had said.

6. And Mō'ses said unto Aar'on, and unto E-le-ā'zar and unto Ith'a-mar, his sons, ^{Let not} ^{Uncover not your heads,} ^{lest} ^{the hair of your heads go loose,} neither rend your clothes; ^{lest} ^{that} ye die, ^{not,} and ^{lest} ^{that he} ⁸ wrath come upon ^{all the} ^{people;} ^{congregation;} but let your brethren, the whole house of Is'ra-el, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled.

7. ⁹ And ye shall not go out from the door of the ^{tabernacle of the congregation,} ^{tent of meeting,} lest ye die: ¹⁰ for the anointing oil of the LORD ^{is} upon you. And they did according to the word of Mō'ses.

¹ Lev. 9: 24; Num. 16: 35.

² Ex. 19: 22; Lev. 21: 6, 17, 21.

³ Isa. 49: 3; John 13: 31; 2 Thes. 1: 10.

⁴ Psa. 39: 9.

⁵ Ex. 6: 18, 22; Num. 3: 19, 30.

⁶ Luke 7: 12; Acts 5: 6, 9.

⁷ Ex. 33: 5; Lev. 13: 45; Num. 6: 6, 7.

⁸ Num. 16: 22.

⁹ Lev. 21: 12.

¹⁰ Ex. 28: 41; Lev. 8: 30.

3. **Moses said unto Aaron**, not in reproof, but in explanation of the terrible judgment. **I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me.** I will be made to appear holy through those who minister in my name. If they will not accomplish this by obedience, I must do it by showing my hatred of all disobedience. **I will be glorified** by the people who see my love of right and hatred of wrong, in the intensest light. **And Aaron held his peace.** He submitted in silence to the overwhelming calamity. He was apparently engaged in performing his public duties as priest. So the Psalmist, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it" (Psa. 39: 9).

"With silence only as their benediction,
God's angels come

Where in the shadow of a great affliction
The soul sits dumb."

— *Whittier*.

4. **Carry . . . out of the camp**, where all corpses were buried. The ceremonies must not be injured nor interrupted by their presence.

5. **In their coats.** Their priestly vestments. Mrs. Ghosn-el-Howie of Palestine thinks that these broad, wide garments were held by four people and used as a blanket to carry the bodies in.

6. **Uncover not your heads.** One of the expressions of mourning. **Neither rend your clothes**, another manifestation of sorrow. **Lest ye die**, because by these signs of mourning they would put private grief above the service of God, and because it would be interpreted as expressing dissatisfaction with what God had done. **Let your brethren . . . bewail.** The whole people might mourn, for this would not only do no harm, but would deepen the impression of the event.

7. **Ye shall not go out from the door of the tabernacle.** It is quite possible that the sudden death of the young men may have made their father Aaron and their brothers afraid lest they might have done something wrong, and anxious to escape so dangerous a place. But Moses assured them that the danger was in disobedience and neglect of duty. It was their safety to do their duty right on. To forsake it was to die.

THE NECESSITY OF THE PUNISHMENT. It was the same as the necessity for all punishment, — in its justice, in its measurement of the evil of the sin, and its prevention of crime. No government of imperfect people can exist or does exist without it. "As has just been pointed out, the ritual system had been inaugurated on that very day. All was new and strange, easily dislodged, depreciated, or corrupted, and therefore needing special guarding. The bud needs, and has protection from rough husks, which the flower can do without. This swift death of offenders against the new order has its parallel in the swift

8. And the LORD spake unto Aar'on, saying,

9. ¹ Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the ^{tabernacle of the congregation, lest} ye die: ^{it shall be} a statute for ever ^{not: it shall be} throughout your generations:

10. ^{And} that ye may ² put difference between the holy and ^{unholy,} and between the ^{the} unclean and ^{the} clean;

11. ³ And that ye may teach the children of Is'ra-el all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Mō'ses.

¹ Ezek. 44: 21; Luke 1: 15;
¹ Tim. 3: 3.

² Lev. 11: 47; Jer. 15: 19; Ezek. 22: 26.
³ Deut. 24: 8; Jer. 18: 18.

death of Ananias and Sapphira, which is to be vindicated on similar grounds. There, too, the necessity was stringent for instant removal of a springing root of bitterness, by which many might be defiled, and for saving the young life of the community from disease, which, unchecked, might infect its whole future. . . . To insist on strict obedience was not the pedantry of ritual martinism, but the carefulness which stops the smallest crack in the 'levee' that alone keeps millions of acres from being drowned by the Mississippi. If we think of all that hung on the question whether Israel was to keep itself unspotted from the heathen world around it and its various cults, perhaps this tremendous judgment will assume a different aspect. . . . The command applied to the priestly order; but all Christians are priests, and their office binds them to loftier lives of more speckless purity, and involves them in sorer chastisements if they stain their garments. Amos had brooded over Moses' words, and reproduced them for the nation: 'You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit upon you all your iniquities;' and Peter echoes them when he speaks of 'judgment to begin at the house of God.' — *Alexander MacLaren* in *Sunday School Times*.

III. **One Cause of the Tragedy.** — Vs. 9-11. 9. **Do not drink wine nor strong drink.** The nearness of this injunction to the story of Nadab and Abihu implies that their sin was due, partly, if not wholly, to intoxication. "The Palestinian Chaldee adds here, 'as thy sons did who died by the burning fire.'" — *Ginsburg*. **When ye go into the tabernacle.** The immediate reason is, of course, that the liquor would confuse their brains, and keep them from performing their duties properly.

The reasons given for this prohibition are two: (1) The tendency of wine drinking is to obscure the (v. 10) **difference between holy and unholy or common;** and (2) they would be better prepared to (v. 11) **teach . . . all the statutes.**

THE TEMPERANCE LESSON.

The lesson for to-day has many practical teachings for all, but especially for the young who may imagine that there is no special danger in drinking a little, especially on social occasions. The tendency seems to be toward an increasing use of wine at social gatherings of young men.

1. Disobedience to God's laws is the road to death, whether it be disobedience to his moral laws or to the laws of health and right use of our bodies.

2. Even the moderate use of strong drink shortens the life in years, and shortens it still more in its effective power.

"ONE BRIGHT, SUNNY MORNING IN PARIS, a few years ago," says the *Christian Endeavor World*, "on the quaint and busy little Rue du Marie St. Honoré, women with baskets on their arms and men on their way to and from business were stopping to read certain brand-new posters, which by their bright red coat and their big black lettering attracted the attention on the walls of the little market house. The title of these posters, 'Verdict of the Savants on Alcohol,' and the closing words, 'Down with Alcohol!' gave the gist of the placard at once, but the long array of quotations from men prominent in French scientific and official life apparently caused the placard to be read with care and thoroughness.

"Dr. Lancereaux, of the Academy of Medicine:

"Alcohol is dangerous, not only by reason of the injuries it causes to the nervous system, but above all by the *denutrition* that it produces in an organism which indulges in it to excess."

"Dr. Hericourt, Director of the *Scientific Review* :

"*Alcohol*, even in the doses that some would style healthful, could very truly be the cause of death from diminishing the resistance of the organism to infectious diseases."

"Dr. Weiss, Engineer of Bridges and Roads, Professor to the Faculty of Medicine :

"The truth, here it is: There is not a well observed fact which shows us that it would be useful to introduce alcohol into nourishment. Many persons, often without suspecting it, suffer from having used it; I do not know one who would have to regret having been deprived of it."

"When once the demon enters,
Stands within the door,
Peace and hope and gladness
Dwell there nevermore."

"Touch the goblet no more !
It will make thy heart sore
To its very core !"
— *Longfellow's Christus*.

THE TEACHING OF COLLEGE ATHLETICS. Trainers for athletics act according to St. Paul's rule, "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." Not only during the contest, but during the long preparation for it. The one in training must not touch cigarettes or liquor. "The little indulgences which other men allow themselves he must forego. Not once will he break the trainer's rules, for he knows that some competitors will refrain even from that once, and gain strength while he is losing it. He is proud of his little hardships, and fatigues, and privations, and counts it a point of honor scrupulously to abstain from anything which might in the slightest degree diminish his chance of success." — *Prof. Marcus Dods*.

Every young person has great opportunities before him, often far greater than his brightest dreams. He is in training for his life work and his usefulness. If he is wise he will do nothing which will hinder his career, and especially his service of God.

3. Even in moderate drinking there is danger of a bad effect upon the mind, disturbing the judgment, distorting the reason.

"Inflaming wine, pernicious to mankind,
Unnerves the limbs and dulls the noble mind."
— *Homer*.

"A number of gentlemen in the State of New York came together to value certain parcels of land which were to be offered at public sale. They agreed unanimously upon the sum they were worth; but upon the day of the sale the owner cunningly treated them to alcoholic drinks, and one of them bid and actually paid four times as much for the property as he or any other man in his right senses thought it worth. A temperance man, having some standing timber to be disposed of at public sale, decided that he would not furnish any alcoholic liquors to the bidders, as was the custom in that day. The auctioneer replied: 'I am sorry, for you will lose a great deal of money. I know how it works, for after men have been drinking the trees look much larger to them than they did before.' A vendue master in Connecticut said: 'I have often in this way got more than ten times the value of the drinks that I have furnished.' Horse jockeys, gamblers, thieves, wholesale merchants, and commercial travelers often furnish alcoholic drinks for similar purposes." — *Julia Coleman in Independent for March 22, 1894*.

It is common now for business men to choose total abstainers in preference to moderate drinkers. The chief railroads will not allow any employee to use strong drink, and the Brotherhood of Engineers will not keep in their number and thus endorse any one who is even a moderate drinker.

4. All drunkards come from the company of moderate drinkers. Not all moderate drinkers become drunkards; very far from it. But all drunkards began by being moderate drinkers.

"The drunkards will never be dead —
I'll tell you the reason why:
A new one comes to take his place
As fast as the old ones die."

"Dr. Arnot, the famous Scotch preacher, once used this striking illustration on the total abstinence question: There are plenty of men, and women, too, who proudly say, 'I am not obliged to sign away my liberty in order to keep on the safe side.' To such people Dr. Arnot says: 'True, you are not obliged; but here is a river which we have to cross. It is broad, and deep, and rapid; whoever falls into it is sure to be drowned. Here is a narrow foot-bridge, a single timber extending across. He who is lithe of limb, and steady of brain and nerve, may skip over it in safety. Yonder is a broad, strong

bridge. Its foundations are solid rock, and its passages are wide. All may cross it in perfect safety, — the aged and feeble, the young and gay, the tottering wee ones, — there is no danger there.' Now, you say, 'I am not obliged to go yonder. Let them go there who cannot walk this timber.' True, true, you are not obliged; but we know that if we cross that timber, though we may go safely, many others who will attempt to follow us will surely perish, and we feel better to go by the bridge! Walking a narrow foot-bridge over a raging torrent is risky business, but it is safety itself compared with tampering with strong drink." — *Sunday School Times*.

5. One of the reasons for the severe punishment of Nadab and Abihu was the bad effect of their example upon others. They did not probably realize in full what they were doing.

One of the strongest reasons for total abstinence is the effect of our example on the young and those who look up to us. Well says the poet in "The Lady's Dream":

"And yet it never was in my soul
To play so ill a part,
But evil is wrought by want of thought,
As well as want of heart."

There are times when to be thoughtless and careless of our influence is almost a crime.

It is like setting up false beacon lights on the shore of the sea of life, which leads to the shipwreck of souls. So the sirens decoyed the sailors who sailed near their island.

"For sadder sight than eye can know,
Than proud bark lost, or seaman's woe,
Or battle fire, or tempest cloud,
Or preybird's shriek, or ocean shroud,
The shipwreck of a soul."

But there is one thing sadder than this, — the shipwrecking of the souls of others.

LESSON VII. — August 18.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT. — Leviticus 16: 5-22.

READ Leviticus 16, Hebrews 9. COMMIT v. 2.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him.* — *HEB. 9: 25.*

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

On the Day of Atonement as a sabbath of rest: Lev. 16: 29, 31; 23: 28-32; Num. 29: 7.

On forgiveness of sin, study, as revealing the heart of God, the beautiful, gracious words in Psalms 51, 103, and 130, and in Isa. 54: 7, 8; 55: 7-9.

On the atonement find verses in the concordance on Atonement, Propitiation, and Reconcile, Reconciliation (as the word for atonement in Rom. 5: 11 and elsewhere is translated in R. v.), and also the references to the death of Christ for sin. From these deduce your conclusions concerning the forgiveness of sin.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

At first sight this is a peculiarly difficult lesson, and should not have been chosen for children.

At the same time the teacher, with sufficient helps and knowledge, can make it very interesting, even to the youngest, by a picturesque presentation of these unique ceremonies, and then showing them how the

cross of Christ, with its sacrifice, revealing the love of God, does for us what these ceremonies did for the Israelites. That cross is an eternal expression to us of God's forgiving love.

Every child needs to feel the guilt of sin, the blessedness of forgiveness, the goodness of God, the sweetness and delight of being a loving child of God.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

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PLAN OF THE LESSON.**SUBJECT: The Forgiveness of Sin.****I. ISRAEL'S NEED OF FORGIVENESS AS SEEN IN THEIR HISTORY.**

What God had done for them.
 How they had sinned against him.
 Why they needed something to make them realize the evil of their sin.

II. OUR NEED OF FORGIVENESS.**III. AN OBJECT-LESSON. SACRIFICE AND ATONEMENT (vs. 5-22).**

The Day of Atonement.
 The first object-lesson. Sacrifice for sin.
 The second object-lesson. The removal of sin.

IV. THE FORGIVENESS OF OUR SINS.

The cross our symbol.
 What forgiving love does for us.

LEARN BY HEART.

Psa. 51: 1, 7, 10; 103: 11-13; Isa. 55: 7.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Not all the blood of beasts."
 "Just as I am, without one plea."

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Think of some definite wrong deed or thought—repent, forsake, confess, trust in Jesus for forgiveness.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—In the interval between the first day of first month of the new year (April) when the tabernacle was completed and the twentieth day of the second month (May) when the Israelites left Sinai. 1490 B. C. according to the common chronology.

Place.—In the plain before Sinai.

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The object-lesson of the two goats.
 Search the history and find for what things the Israelites needed forgiveness.
 For what things Aaron and the priests needed forgiveness.
 What was the meaning of the sacrifice?
 What was the teaching of the scapegoat?
 What was the need of such object-lessons?
 How does the cross of Christ represent both of these lessons?
 What does forgiveness do for us?

I. Israel's Need of Forgiveness, as Seen in the History.—In order to understand the symbols and types of this lesson, it will be best to have the scholars see for themselves in the history how untrained and imperfect these people were, how often they sinned against their heavenly Father in spite of all he had done for them.

WHAT GOD HAD DONE. The leader Moses. The "wonders on the field of Zoan," *i. e.*, the plagues that made Pharaoh let them go. The crossing of the Red Sea. The destruction of their enemies. The Passover festival. The sweetening of the bitter waters. The palm groves of Elim. The quails. The manna. The pillar of cloud and fire to guide them. The victory over the Amalekites. The law from Sinai. The tabernacle for religious worship.

THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE. Continually repeated bitter complaints. The murmuring at Marah. Complaints against Moses and Aaron. Longing for Egypt and its slavery because of its "flesh pots." Worshiping the golden calf. Breaking their covenant with God, their oath of allegiance, in which even Aaron and his sons participated, his sons defiantly disobedient even in their public service.

These and other sins during their long training were unfitting them to conquer the promised land, and to live in it as God's people.

Therefore in some way their sinful nature must be removed, and this course of sin must be stopped.

Their experience of God's goodness had not accomplished this.

The punishment of their sin had not succeeded. Both had accomplished something, but something more was needed.

They needed something to make them realize more deeply the awful evil and danger of sin, the greatness of its wrong against their God; something to remove the separation and estrangement from God which sin always brings between the sinner and his heavenly Father, as wrong-doing separates a child from his earthly father; something to deliver them from the sin itself and the tendency to sin.

II. Our Need of Forgiveness.—Every person sins in thought and in deed. Even the youngest are conscious of wrong-doing, and as they grow better they will realize still more the contrast between themselves and the perfect law of God. The better we grow the higher our ideal, and the farther away our sins seem to place us. So Thomas Hood sang:

"I remember, I remember
The fir-trees dark and high;
I used to think their slender tops
Were close against the sky.

"It was a childish ignorance,
But now 'tis little joy
To know I'm farther off from heaven
Than when I was a boy."

So the stars of goodness and perfection which seemed so near us once we see now to be at a measureless distance away. It is a well-known fact that "the sense of sin appears most keen and painful in the purest and truest hearts: that it is the most holy of our race who have most acutely felt their guilt and need of forgiveness." For "If any man say that he have no sin he deceiveth himself and the truth is not in him." "The years do not lessen nor wear thin this sense of guilt. Rather they bring out all the color that is in it; red and awful to our eyes." So that we can never judge the depth of guilt by the pangs of conscience or the confession of sin. Theodore Parker overlooked this fact when he said that if the confessions of sin in prayer-meeting were sincere the ones that made them ought to be sent to State prison. They only judged themselves by a higher standard, with a tenderer conscience than others.

We are helpless to blot out our deeds from the Book of Remembrance, "the handwriting on the wall." Nor can we of ourselves escape the consequences and punishment which are intended to deter us from committing sin.

"I saw far down the coming time
The fiery chastisement of crime,
With noise of mingling hosts, and jar

Of falling towers and shouts of war,
I saw the nations rise and fall,
Like fire-gleams on my tent's white wall."
—Whittier, "Ezekiel."

ILLUSTRATION. "I have read of one who dreamed a dream, when in great distress of mind about religion. He thought he stood in the outer court of heaven, and he saw a glorious host marching up, singing sweet hymns and bearing the banners of victory; and they passed by him through the gate, and when they vanished he heard in the distance sweet strains of music. 'Who are they?' he asked. 'They are the goodly fellowship of the prophets, who have gone to be with God.' And he heaved a deep sigh as he said, 'Alas, I am not one of them, and never shall be; I cannot enter there.' By and by there came another band, equally lovely in appearance, and equally triumphant, and robed in white. They passed within the portals, and again were shouts of welcome heard within. 'Who are they?' he asked. 'They are the goodly fellowship of the apostles.' 'Alas,' he said, 'I belong not to that fellowship, and cannot enter there.' He still waited and lingered, in the hope that he might get in; but the next multitude did not encourage him; for they were a noble army of martyrs. He could not go with them, nor wave their palm branches. At last, as he walked, he saw a larger host than all the rest put together, marching and singing most melodiously, and in front walked a woman that was a sinner, and the thief that died on the cross, hard by the Saviour, and he thought, 'There will be no shouting about them.' But to his astonishment, it seemed as if all heaven was rent with sevenfold shouts as they passed in. And the angel said to him, 'These are they that are mighty sinners saved by mighty grace.' And then he said, 'Blessed be God, I can go in with them.' And so he awoke. Blessed be God, you and I too can go in with that company. I cannot hope to go in anywhere but with that company. Such is my own sense of how I expect to enter heaven, and we will go together, brother sinner, or sister sinner, trusting in the precious blood, and washed in the blood of the Lamb. God grant it may be so." — C. H. Spurgeon.

III. An Object-Lesson of Warning and Hope. Sacrifice and Atonement.—Vs. 5-22.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT. Of the five great festivals of the Jews, —

1. the Feast of Trumpets—welcoming the new civil year, on the 1st of Tisri (September-October), one day only ;

5. And he shall take of ¹ the congregation of the children of Is'ra-el two ^{kids of the goats} ^{he-goats} for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.

6. And Aar'on shall ^{offer his} ^{present the} bullock of the sin offering, which ^{is} for himself, and ² make ^{an} atonement for himself, and for his house.

7. And he shall take the two goats, and ^{present} ^{set} them before the LORD ^{at} ^{at} the door of the ^{tabernacle of the congregation.} ^{tent of meeting.}

8. And Aar'on shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for ^{the scapegoat.} ^{A-zaz'el.}

9. And Aar'on shall ^{bring} ^{present} the goat upon which the ^{LORD's lot fell,} ^{lot fell for the LORD,} and offer him ^{for} ^{for} a sin offering.

¹ Lev. 4: 14; Num. 29: 11; 2 Chron. 29: 21; Ezek. 45: 22.

² Lev. 9: 7; Heb. 5: 2

2. the Passover, 14th of Nisan (or Abib), April, — the beginning of the sacred year, lasting seven days; as did 3 and 4;

3. the Feast of Pentecost (in Sivan, end of May), — the first fruits of the harvest;

4. the Feast of Tabernacles, in Tisri (beginning the 15th), — feast of ingathering or thanksgiving;

5. the Day of Atonement, fast day (10th of Tisri), — one day only, —

All were joyous festivals except the Day of Atonement. For even in deliverance from sin, the goodness of God, joyous delight in God, hope, a glorious future has more to do than grief and mourning, though these are absolutely necessary.

THE DAY OF ATONEMENT was held on the 10th day of the new year, about October 1, varying with the new moon. It was a day of fasting and prayer, of the most solemn services, of repentance and reformation, and of good resolutions.

It was kept as a most solemn sabbath and fast, when all must abstain from work and "afflict their souls," on pain of being "cut off from among the people" (v. 29; Acts 27: 9). "Its ceremonies signified the public humiliation of the people for all the sins of the past year, and the remission of those sins by the atonement which the high priest made within the veil, whither he entered on this day only." — *Smith*. "The Day of Atonement is the time when universal reconciliation takes place. Children ask forgiveness of parents; those who have wronged one another implore pardon; all differences on that occasion are healed, and everybody is on good terms with one another." — *C. S. Robinson*.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS have been so often ridiculed that some people are afraid to make them lest they break them. But a broken resolution is not a sign of failure if we immediately resolve again. The only real failure is the failing to resolve again and again till at last we succeed. Resolutions true and sincere express, in the words of Carlyle, "the faithful struggle of an earnest human soul towards what is good and best, — struggle often baffled sore, baffled down into entire wreck, yet a struggle never ended; ever with tears, repentance, true, unconquerable purpose begun anew. Poor human nature! Is not a man's walking in truth always that, — 'a succession of falls' ? Man can do no other. In this wild element of a life he has to struggle upward, now fallen, now abased; and ever with tears, repentance, and a bleeding heart, he has to rise again, struggle again, still onward. That his struggle be a faithful, unconquerable one, that is the question of questions."

In the observance of the day amid a varied ceremonial two young goats were chosen (v. 5) to represent the atonement for sin and its forgiveness, by two object-lessons, both of them essential.

THE FIRST OBJECT-LESSON was the offering of one of the goats as a sacrifice for sin (v. 9). The offerer was himself purified by a special sacrifice (vs. 11-14). The scene was in front of the tabernacle and within it.

"By the side of the victim, which was placed between the porch and the altar towards the east, stood the high priest, arrayed in his white robes, with his face towards the west. In this attitude of a penitent sinner, the pontiff laid both his hands upon the sacrifice and confessed his sins in an audible voice in the sight of God and the assembled congregation as follows: 'O Lord, I have sinned, I have committed iniquity, I have transgressed before thee, I and my house. O Lord, I beseech thee, cover over my sins, iniquities, and transgressions which I have committed before thee, I and my house, even as it is written in the law of Moses thy servant.' " — *Edersheim*.

10. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be ^{presented} alive before the LORD, to make ¹an atonement with him, and to ^{set} let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness, send him away for A-za'zel

11. And Aar'on shall ^{bring present} the bullock of the sin offering, which ^{is} for himself, and shall make ^{an} atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bullock of the sin offering which ^{is} for himself:

12. ^{And} he shall take ²a censer full of ^{burning} coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of ³sweet incense beaten small, and bring ^{it} within the ^{veil}:

13. ⁴And ^{and} he shall put the incense upon the fire before the LORD, that the cloud of the incense may cover the ⁵mercy seat that ^{is} upon the testimony, that he die not:

¹ 1 John 2: 2.

² Lev. 10: 1; Num. 16: 18.

³ Ex. 30: 34.

⁴ Ex. 30: 1, 7, 8; Num.

¹⁶: 7.

⁵ Ex. 25: 21.



"Scapegoat."

From a painting by Holman Hunt in the South Kensington Museum, London.

After this the goat was slain for the people's sins, and the blood was sprinkled upon the altar. The blood was the life, representing the life that was forfeited by sin. God was not unwilling to forgive. He wanted to forgive, a thousand times more desirous to forgive than the sinner was to be forgiven. But the forgiveness must be offered in such a way as to make men turn from sin, and not feel free to go on in sin.

The blood, the life, the most precious thing any living being possesses, expressed the cost of sin, just as the death of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, shedding his blood for the sins of men, presents

before the world the highest possible expression of the evil and danger of sin. It is no light matter that requires such a sacrifice. If it was worth while for Jesus to die in order to save us from sin, it is worth while for us to die rather than to sin.

For God to offer free pardon for sin without the atonement would be to defeat his own purpose of redeeming the world.

The blood of Jesus Christ is the highest expression of his love. It is love that saves, for love is the most costly, as well as the greatest, of all virtues.

THE SECOND OBJECT-LESSON WAS THE SCAPEGOAT (vs. 8, 10, 20-22). To be the scapegoat (vs. 10, 26) is translated in the R. V. "for Azā'zēl." The sacrificed goat was "for Jehovah." This was "for Azazel," his exact opposite, the prince of darkness, according to the majority of modern scholars. In Milton's *Paradise Lost* "Azazel is represented as the standard bearer of the infernal hosts, cast out from heaven and become the embodiment of despair." — *Century Dictionary*. "The meaning is very uncertain." "There can be little doubt that the ceremonial was intended as a symbolical declaration that the land and the people are now purged from guilt, their sins being handed over to the evil spirit to whom they are held to belong." — *Professor Driver in Hastings' Bible Dictionary*.

Others regard the word as meaning *complete separation*, and the sins represented by the scapegoat were completely removed, — even "as far as the east is from the west."

This outward ceremony was necessary to make real to them the invisible spiritual fact of forgiveness.

14. ^{And} ^{and} ¹ he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and ² sprinkle ^{it} with his finger upon the ^{mercy seat eastward ;} ^{mercy-seat on the east ;} and before the ^{mercy seat} ^{mercy-seat} shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.

15. ³ Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that ^{is} ^{is} for the people, and bring his blood ⁴ within the ^{vail,} ^{veil,} and do with ^{that} ^{his} blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the ^{mercy seat,} ^{mercy-seat,} and before the ^{mercy seat :} ^{mercy-seat :}

16. ^{And} ^{and} ⁵ he shall ^{an} make ^{an} atonement for the holy ^{place,} ^{place,} because of the ^{uncleanness} ^{uncleanness} of the children of Is'ra-el, and because of their transgressions, ⁱⁿ ⁱⁿ all their sins : and so shall he do for the ^{tabernacle of the congregation,} ^{tent of meeting,} that ^{remaineth among} ^{dwelleth with} them in the midst of their ^{uncleanness.} ^{uncleanness,}

17. ⁶ And there shall be no man in the ^{tabernacle of the congregation} ^{tent of meeting} when he goeth in to make ^{an} atonement in the holy ^{place,} ^{place,} until he come out, and have made ^{an} atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the ^{congregation} ^{assembly} of Is'ra-el.

¹ Lev. 4 : 5 ; Heb. 9 : 13.

² Lev. 4 : 6.

³ Heb. 2 : 17.

⁴ V. 2 ; Heb. 6 : 19.

⁵ Ex. 29 : 36 ; Heb. 9 : 22, 23.

⁶ Ex. 34 : 3 ; Luke 1 : 10.

"The atonement had been made, but the *consciousness* of the people were not yet free from a sense of personal guilt and sin. Their own personal guilt and sins were now to be removed from them, and that in a symbolical rite, at one and the same time the most mysterious and the most significant of all.

"While the other goat was being sacrificed, the scapegoat had been looking eastward confronting the people, waiting for the terrible load which it was to carry away 'unto a land not inhabited.' Laying both his hands on the head of this goat, the high priest now confessed and pleaded: 'O Lord, thy people, the house of Israel, have transgressed; they have rebelled; they have sinned before thee. I beseech thee now absolve their transgressions, their rebellion, and their sin that they have sinned against thee, as it is written in the law of Moses thy servant, that on this day he shall make atonement for you to cleanse you from all your sins, and ye shall be cleansed.' And while the prostrate multitude worshiped at the name of Jehovah, the high priest turned his face towards them as he uttered the last words, '*Ye shall be cleansed!*' After the confession had been made over the head of the scapegoat, it was committed to the charge of some person or persons, previously chosen for the purpose, and carried away into the wilderness; where, as we should understand (v. 22), it was set at liberty. The arrival of the goat in the wilderness was telegraphed by the waving of flags from station to station, till a few minutes after its occurrence it was known in the temple, and whispered from ear to ear that 'the goat had borne upon him all their iniquities into a land not inhabited.' " — *Edersheim*.

CONCLUDING SERVICES. After this there were readings of the Scripture, with prayers. The high priest then changed his linen garments for the golden garments of his priesthood, and offered sin offerings and burnt offerings, and finally offered the evening incense on the golden altar symbolizing prayer and praise, and lit the lamps on the golden candlestick, for the light of God's countenance now shone upon them.

IV. **The Forgiveness of Our Sins.** — (1) We all need the forgiveness of God, for all have sinned.

(2) We need the removal of our sins, from our hearts and from remembrance, "as far as the east is from the west," where they can trouble us no more.

(3) We all need the assurance of forgiveness, in some clear and positive way. When we have sinned against assurance, we can hear their voices saying we are forgiven, and live in the actual treatment by forgiving love. But how may we know that God has forgiven?

THE ANSWER to these needs is the cross of Christ, shining in his Word and in history, as the great glass cross lighted on the spire of a church on the Hudson shines out through the darkness.

THE CROSS IS THE ETERNAL EMBLEM AND EXPRESSION OF GOD'S FORGIVING LOVE.

It tells clearly to us all that the two symbols of sacrifice and forgiveness in our lesson to-day revealed dimly to the Israelites in the wilderness.

18. And he shall go out unto the altar that ^{is} before the LORD, and ¹ make ^{an} atonement for it; and shall take of the blood of the bullock, and of the blood of the goat, and put ^{it} upon the horns of the altar round about.

19. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and ² hallow it from the ^{uncleanness} ^{uncleanesses} of the children of Is'ra-el.

20. And when he hath made an end of ³ reconciling ^{atoning for} the holy ^{place,} ^{place,} and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall ^{bring} ^{present} the live goat:

21. ^{And} ^{and} Aar'on shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Is'ra-el, and all their transgressions, ⁱⁿ ^{even} all their sins; and ⁴ ^{putting} ^{he shall put} them upon the head of the goat, and shall send ^{him} ^{him} away by the hand of a ^{fit man} ^{man that is in readiness} into the wilderness:

22. ^{And} ^{and} the goat shall ⁵ bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: ^{solitary land:} and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

¹ Ex. 30: 10; Lev. 4: 7, 18; Heb. 9: 22, 23.

² Ezek. 43: 20.

³ V. 16; Ezek. 45: 20.

⁴ Isa. 53: 6.

⁵ Isa. 53: 11, 12; John 1: 29; Heb. 9: 28;

1 Pet. 2: 24.

"Is it not strange, the darkest hour
That ever dawned on sinful earth,
Should touch the heart with softer power,

For comfort, than an angel's mirth?
That to the Cross the mourner's eye should turn,
Sooner than where the stars of Bethlehem burn?"

FIRST. Forgiveness does not remove all the consequences of sin. It cannot bring back the slain. It cannot remove the fact of sin. It cannot immediately remove the scarlet letter, as in Hawthorne's romance. It leaves certain marks and scars on the soul often for a long time. And this is the warning against sin. It is folly to sin, imagining that it is easy to recover from its effects, as we see in the case of the Israelites we are studying.

SECOND. God's love can transform even these scars into songs of victory. Out of the cross, the work of wicked men, blossoms the heroic example of Christ and everlasting loving kindness of our Father in heaven.

THIRD. Forgiveness does not remove the penalty of sin. It does bring back many blessings that sin has forfeited. It does restore the outward expressions of God's favor. We cannot conceive of a pardon that goes on punishing the same as before. We do not forgive another if it makes no change in our actions toward him. We do not forgive a debt if we continue to press for its payment.

FOURTH. How can the Cain mark be removed from our souls? Will not the black past be forever present, forever seen? One simple illustration has brought comfort. I have seen a black coal by the roadside, the very essence of blackness. I have seen the sun shine on that black coal and I could no longer see the blackness because of the sun's radiance reflected from it. It was no longer a black coal, but a star of glory. So when we get to heaven, the wondrous love and wisdom of God and of his Son Jesus in saving such sinners as we have been will make ourselves and every one forget the sin in the shining of redeeming love. And even here the splendid fight against sin, the glorious victory over it, the good that has been wrought in us by overcoming it will put the sin in the background, and its blackness will be hidden by the light of the victory. The dust and smoke of the battle will be forgotten in the shining of the morning star, the reward of him that overcometh, as heroism hides the suffering which was the occasion of the heroic deed.

ILLUSTRATION. Rev. E. A. Rand, in a little poem called "The Two Tides," compares the covering of our sins to the incoming tide which overflows the mud and wrecks and refuse, "that lie in ghastly heaps along the strand," and only the rippling water is seen reflecting the light of the moon.

"And thou, O Christ, our Light, look down
In all the lustre of thy grace,

Till every wave as mirror hold
The image of thy shining face."

FIFTH. Forgiveness brings restoration to the family and favor of God. And this is a far higher blessing than the removal of suffering. Sin has set us in opposition to God, so that we do not feel at home in his presence. Forgiveness brings us close to the heart of God, into oneness with him. It gives us a new start in the spiritual life. It gives a new meaning to the love of God, a new vision of righteousness and tender mercies and loving kindness. "In giving forgiveness God gives himself."

SIXTH. Forgiveness brings righteousness and spiritual life to the soul.

"O God in the stream that for sinners did flow
Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

SEVENTH. As with the Israelites in the wilderness, so to us another great blessing follows forgiveness, God again trusts us, and he shows it by again committing his work to our charge. Isaiah, when the coal from off the altar had touched him, and a voice said, "Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged," heard also the voice, saying, "Whom shall I send?" and "Go, and tell this people" (Isa. 6: 6-8). When Christ forgave Peter's denial, he restored the fallen apostle to his apostolic work, — "Feed my sheep; feed my lambs." And often better work is done than ever before, not through the sin, but through repentance and victory and forgiveness.

"That Sacrifice! — the death of Him —
The High and ever Holy One!
Well may the conscious Heaven grow dim,
And blacken the beholding Sun!

And shall the sinful heart, alone,
Behold unmoved the atoning hour,

When Nature trembles on her throne,
And Death resigns his iron power?
Oh, shall the heart — whose sinfulness
Gave keenness to His sore distress,
And added to His tears of blood —
Refuse its trembling gratitude!"

— Whittier.

LESSON VIII. — August 25.

ISRAEL JOURNEYING TO CANAAN.

Numbers 10: 11-13, 29-36.

READ Numbers 10: 11 — 12: 16. COMMIT vs. 35, 36.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light.* — Ex. 13: 21.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Trace on the map the journey from Sinai to Kadesh-barnea near the southern border of the promised land. Look up in Numbers the events which took place on the journey,

and study their bearing on their training for their new home, and for their development as an independent nation.

- | | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| Ex. 19: 1. | I. Sinai. | After a stay of nearly a year at Sinai, from the fifteenth day of the third month of the first year after leaving Egypt until the twentieth day of the second month of the second year, they move three days' journey to |
| Num. 10: 11, 12. | | |
| Num. 10: 33. | | |
| Num. 11: -13. | II. Taberah (<i>burning</i>), | where their complainings bring down fire from heaven; and next to |
| Num. 11: 1-34. | III. Kibroth-hattaavah (<i>the graves of lust</i>), | where the people are smitten, while the flesh of the quails is yet in their mouths. Thence they proceed to |
| Num. 11: 35. | IV. Hazeroth (<i>Hudherah</i>). | Here Aaron and Miriam sin, and Miriam is smitten with leprosy. The next station is |
| Num. 13: 26. | V. Kadesh-barnea (? <i>Ain-el-Weibeh</i>). | Hence twelve spies are sent to Canaan; ten bring back an evil report; Caleb and Joshua alone remain faithful. The people murmur, and are condemned to wander forty years. Rebellion of Korah; earthquake; fire and plague inflicted. |
| Num. 14: 1-39. | | |
| Cor. 10: 10. | | |
| Num. 16. | | |

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

With Bibles in hand, and a map, let the scholars, whom you have asked the previous week to make the above inductive study, point out the places, and rapidly state what took place at each one; show them pictures of places and events as far as you can find them, either the penny pictures or the stereoscopic.

Then, with Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* in mind, discuss with the scholars the meaning of these events for Israel and for us today.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 35, 36; Deut. 8: 2; Heb. 11: 13, 14.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Have I begun to go under the leadership of Jesus toward the heavenly character and heaven?

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Lead, kindly light."

"Guide me, oh, thou great Jehovah."

PLAN OF THE LESSON.**SUBJECT: Our Guide Through Life's Wilderness.****I. THE SINAI SCHOOL TERM CLOSED.**

Their experiences.

Their numbers.

II. THE WILDERNESS LIFE BETWEEN SINAI AND THE PROMISED LAND (v. 12).**III. THE GUIDE THROUGH THE WILDERNESS (vs. 11-13, 33-36).**

The pillar of cloud and of fire.

The benedictions.

A strange guidance.

IV. HOBAB, OR HUMAN AID IN THE WILDERNESS (vs. 29-32).

The invitation.

The first inducement—rejected.

The second inducement—probably accepted.

Human aid in the wilderness.

V. OUR GUIDE THROUGH THE WILDERNESS OF LIFE.**LITERARY REFERENCES.**

Compare Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Poem, "Through the night of doubt and sorrow."

Hymns, "Traveling to the better land,"

"Lead me on."

Poem, "We know not what is expedient."

Anon. Foster's *Cyclopedia of Poetical Illustrations*, 3619.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Numbers. International *Critical Commentary* by Prof. G. Buchanan Gray. Watson in the *Expositor's Bible* is especially helpful. On the desert of Paran see Trumbull's *Kadesh-barnea* (Scribner's). Palmer's *The Desert of the Exodus* (Harper's). Chapters on the lesson in Taylor's *Moses the Lawgiver*, Meyer's *Moses, the Servant of God*, and Mrs. Whitney's *The Open Mystery*.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—1490 according to the common chronology. Scholars are divided between this date and 200 years later.

The second stage of the wilderness journey, the new start from Sinai, began on the twentieth of the second month of the second year after leaving Egypt (May).

They had spent about a year at Sinai (the 20th day of the second month was May 27 in 1902, and will be May 4 in 1915).

Place.—They started from Sinai near the southern point of the peninsula between the two northern arms of the Red Sea. They moved in a northerly direction into the wilderness of Paran, or the Tih (Tēē), the great barren region between Sinai and the southern border of Palestine.

HOME STUDY**AND CLASS DISCUSSION.**

The book of Numbers.

The first year's schooling.

The great and terrible wilderness.

The pillar of cloud and fire.

The strange guidance.

The invitation to Hobab.

What Hobab could do to help.

Our guide.

I. The Sinai School Term Closed.—V. 11. The Israelites had now remained nearly a year at Sinai, where they were safe from attack from Egypt on the scattered population of the desert. All this time they had been in God's school preparatory to their longer training and discipline in the wilderness.

The people left Egypt a mere crowd of fugitive slaves, with only the rudiments of national organization, and the dimmest religious ideas. But the interval had effected an

11. And it came to pass ^{on the twentieth day of the second month, in the second year, the month,} that the cloud ^{in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of} ^{was taken up from} ^{off} the tabernacle of the testimony.

¹ Num. 9: 17.

immense change. They had now become an organized people, with laws, a constitution or covenant, a priesthood, a religious ritual, and house of worship; and with a political and military organization, under judges and officers placed over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens (Ex. 18: 25; Duet. 1: 15), and a general council of seventy elders (Ex. 24: 1; Num. 11: 16, 24-26) which the rabbis believe was the origin of the Sanhedrim.

Make a record of their experiences during this year, and show how each one was a preparation for their coming life.

According to the census of Numbers 1 and 2, there were 603,550 men, 20 years old and upwards, besides the 22,273 Levites. This would naturally imply about 2,000,000 in all. But Prof. Willis J. Beecher, of Auburn Theological Seminary, in a lecture not long ago suggested that the enumeration may have been technical, just as we count an army. A regiment consists of 1,000 men, while often in various ways not more than 400 or 500 are present, and yet we call it a regiment; 600,000 may be equivalent to 600 regiments, "the thousands" containing but a few hundreds, so that there may not have been more than 300,000 men or 1,000,000 persons in all.

This schooling was like a preparatory school education for young people.

II. The Wilderness Life between Sinai and the Promised Land. — V. 12. And the cloud rested in the wilderness of Paran. This was reached only after a three days' journey (Num. 10: 33; 12: 16), which is here considered, in a general way, as a single march. Paran is the modern desert of Tih, still pointed out by Arabic traditions as the scene of the wanderings. It measures about 150 miles in either direction, extending from the Sinai region to Canaan. Winterbotham describes it thus: "This wilderness of Paran is, indeed, 'a great and terrible wilderness' (Deut. 1: 19), lacking for the most part the precipitous grandeur of the granite mountains of Sinai, but lacking also their fertile valleys and numerous streams. A bare limestone or sandstone plateau, crossed by low ranges of hills, seamed with innumerable dry water-courses, and interspersed with large patches of sand and gravel, is what now meets the eye of the traveler in this forsaken land. . . . Perhaps so bad a country has never been attempted by any army in modern days, even by the Russian troops in Central Asia."

There were enemies of whom they knew almost nothing; and dangers of various kinds, from hunger, from thirst, from serpents, from wandering tribes. Nor could the people know what was best for them to train them for the conquest of the promised land, and for the best use of it when they had obtained it, to be the people of God, and to make known to the nations the true religion and the true God.

III. The Guide through the Wilderness. — Vs. 11-13, 33-36. **11. Twentieth day of the second month** of the civil year, sometime in November (in 1910 the 20th of Marchesvan, the second month, will fall on November 18; in 1915, on October 28). **The cloud was taken up from off.** More correctly "from upon," not "from off" as A. V., nor "from over" as R. V.



From a Photograph by Wilson.

A Bit of the Red Sea.

The place where the children of Israel encamped after leaving Elim.

12. And the children of Is'ra-el ^{took} ^{set forward according to} ^{rested} ^{abode} ¹ their journeys out of the ² wilderness of Si'nāi; and the cloud ³ in the wilderness of Pā'ran.

13. And they first took their journey ⁴ according to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of Mō'ses.

29. And Mō'ses said unto Hō'bāb, the son of ⁵ Ra-gu'el ^{Rcu'el} the Mīd'ian-ite, Mō'ses' father in law, We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD said, ⁶ I will give it you: come thou with us, and ⁷ we will do thee good: for ⁸ the LORD hath spoken good concerning Is'ra-el.

30. And he said unto him, I will not go; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred.

31. And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou ^{mayest} ^{ahalt} be to us ⁹ instead of eyes.

32. And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that ¹⁰ what ^{goodness} ^{good soever} the LORD shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.

33. And they ^{departed} ^{set forward} from ¹¹ the mount of the LORD three days' journey; and the ark of the covenant of the LORD ¹² went before them ^{in the} three days' journey, to ^{search} ^{seek} out a resting place for them.

34. And ¹³ the cloud of the LORD ^{was upon} ^{was over} them by day, when they ^{went out of} ^{set forward from} the camp.

35. And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Mō'ses said, ¹⁴ Rise up, O LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee.

36. And when it rested, he said, Return, O LORD, unto the ^{many} ^{ten thousands} thousands of Is'ra-el.

¹ Ex. 40: 36; Num. 2: 9, 16.

² Ex. 19: 1; Num. 1: 1; 9: 5.

³ Gen. 21: 21; Num. 12: 16; Deut. 1: 1.

⁴ V. 5: 6; Num. 2: 34.

⁵ Ex. 2: 18.

⁶ Gen. 12: 7.

⁷ Judg. 1: 16.

⁸ Gen. 32: 12; Ex. 3: 8; 6: 7.

⁹ Job 29: 15.

¹⁰ Judg. 1: 16.

¹¹ Ex. 3: 1.

¹² Deut. 1: 33; Psal. 132: 8.

¹³ Ex. 13: 21.

¹⁴ Psal. 68: 1, 2; 132: 8.

"The cloud rested upon the tent, and the signal for the march was the lifting it so that it was high over the tent." — *Prof. Willis F. Beecher.*

12. **The cloud rested.** Abode, made a stay of some length, at the end of their first period of marching.

13. **And they first took their journey.** They began their new journey; or the ark of the Testimony went first to lead the way. **According to the commandment of the LORD by the hand of** ("by means of," "through") **Moses.** The manner of march was disclosed to Moses, either by the direct Word of God or by divine illumination of his mind, and he announced it to the leaders of the tribes.

33. **Three days' journey** before they made a more permanent stop when they would settle down for a time in their regular encampment.

35. **When the ark set forward.** When they began their day's march there was a religious ceremonial, a kind of morning prayer. Compare the praying of Cromwell's iron-sides when they went into battle. **Moses said**

"RISE UP, LORD,
AND LET THINE ENEMIES BE SCATTERED
AND LET THEM THAT HATE THEE
FLEE BEFORE THEE."

At the close of the day (v. 36), when it rested, he said

RETURN, O LORD,
UNTO THE MANY THOUSANDS OF ISRAEL.

The many thousands of Israel. Literary, "the tens of thousands" of persons who

constituted "the thousands," or regiments, of Israel. The ark now took its place in the center of the encampment.

Compare the benediction with which the high priest was to bless the people:

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee,
The Lord make his face shine upon thee,
And be gracious unto thee!
The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee,
And give thee peace."

COMPARE St. Patrick's prayer when he entered on the conversion of Ireland:

"May the strength of God pilot me,
May the power of God preserve me,
May the wisdom of God instruct me,
May the eye of God view me,

May the ear of God hear me;
Christ be with me,
Christ in the hearts of all to whom I speak."

THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND OF FIRE. Two symbols of God always went before the people on their march. The ark of God, containing the two tables of the Law, the covenant of the people with God; and over it the guiding pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, rising high above the host, a conspicuous object that could be seen not only by the marshalled host, but by the scattered companies of women and children, as they fed their flocks, and followed afar off the marvelous signal of the divine presence. A great host marching through a country without roads or other marks of civilization, must be provided with some conspicuous object to serve as a signal to the main body, and to all straggling parties connected with it.

Hence, the round grate, full of kindled fuel, elevated on a pole, which was carried before caravans and armies in the East. The ancient Persians carried a sacred fire in silver altars before their armies, and other ancient nations observed a similar custom. For fuller description see Num. 9: 15-23.

A STRANGE GUIDANCE. The Lord was guiding the people to the promised land. We can imagine them saying, Now that the Lord guides us we will be led only in pleasant ways, in green pastures, and beside still waters, away from dangers and enemies, away from serpents, and drought, and hunger, and we will reach the promised land by the shortest route, in the quickest time. But, as a matter of fact, the Lord had led them into the trouble by the Red Sea, into the dry and thirsty land where no water was. He led them where they suffered from hunger and thirst, where they were bitten by serpents, where enemies stood ready to attack them, and kept them forty years on a journey that could have been accomplished in a few weeks. The Lord himself did this by his guiding pillar, led them by the wells and palm groves of Elim, fed them with manna, delivered them from their enemies, and brought water out of the rock.

Why did the Lord lead them thus? It was to prepare them for the promised land when they should reach it, and fit them to conquer all enemies, to be a prosperous and holy nation that would commend to all other nations the God they obeyed and the truths by which they lived. Without this discipline their going to the promised land would have been a failure.

IV. Hobab; or the Human Aid in the Wilderness Journey. — Vs. 29-32. **29. And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel.** This is the same as the Reuel of Ex. 2: 18, who is generally supposed to be the same as Jethro (Ex. 3: 1), Reuel being his name, and Jethro, which means *Excellency*, his honorary title. **The Midianite.** Hobab belonged to the Kenites, an Arab tribe of Midian, east of Sinai. **Moses' father in law.** The Hebrew word here translated "father in law" means any relation by marriage, so that Hobab may have been Moses' brother-in-law, being brother to Zipporah, Moses' wife. It will be remembered that already a lasting friendship had been formed between the Kenites and Israelites, sealed by sacrifice (Ex. 18: 12). **We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD said, I will give it you.** He had in mind God's promises made to Abraham (Gen. 12: 7; 13: 15; 17: 8; 28: 13; Ex. 3: 8).

TWO REASONS why Hobab should go were urged by Moses. *First reason: Come thou with us, and we will do thee good.* Hobab would have the manna, the guiding pillar, the tabernacle, the ever-present manifestation of God, the promised land, and, especially, the splendid future before the nation, — **For the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel.**

This argument was not successful.

30. And he said unto him, I will not go. His own land and kindred had greater attractions.

The second reason was of a different nature.

31. Thou knowest . . . the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead of eyes. Moses had been in portions of the wilderness, but Hobab had been familiar with the whole region all his life, and had traversed it again and again, and could render powerful aid, and accomplish the most useful work of his whole life.

"The divine guidance of the pillar of the cloud would not render superfluous the human conductor, who could indicate the spots where water, fuel, and pasture might be found, the dangers from hurricanes, and the localities infested by robbers." — *Bible Commentary*. Hobab belonged to a powerful tribe, and thus would be able to obtain supplies from other tribes, and to gain assistance or protection from them. Bruce says, also, that the Arabs often cover up their wells so that it is difficult to find them. The very great difficulty most travelers have had for many years in finding the wells at Kadesh Barnea by the misleading of guides, as described in Dr. Trumbull's *Kadesh Barnea*, is a good example of the need of such a man as Hobab.

This reason seems to have had the effect of convincing Hobab, who was a Kenite (Judg. 1: 16), a branch of the Midianites. "From Judg. 1: 16; 4: 11; 1 Sam. 15: 6, it is evident that his posterity, under the name of 'Kenites,' had an abiding place among the tribes of Israel, even as late as the time of Saul." — *Bush*.

GIVING THE INVITATION. Every Christian should be able to give just such an invitation as this. He knows whither he is going, and what joys are sure at the end of the journey. The power of the invitation lies in our own appreciation of the blessings of the Christian life.

TWO MOTIVES are the same as those Moses used to persuade Hobab.

THE STRONGER MOTIVE. Over many minds the second motive Moses used is the more powerful. God wants you to be a Christian not only because it is best for you, but because there is work for you to do in his kingdom; there are multitudes to help, battles to fight, victories to gain, the kingdom of God to come, the world to be redeemed.

So Ruskin says that no good work is done for hire. "For love of their country, or their leader, or their duty, men fight steadily; but for massacre and plunder, feebly. Your signal, 'England expects every man to do his duty,' they will answer; your signal of black flag and death's head, they will not answer." — *Modern Painters, Pt. 9, ch. 12*.

V. Our Guide Through the Wilderness of Life. 1. **WHERE WE ARE GOING.** Like Bunyan's Pilgrim we are on our way to our promised land — the heavenly character, the heavenly life, the heavenly conditions described in Revelation 21, 22.

2. **THE WILDERNESS LIFE.** Life is to us a trackless region of country. The future is hidden by an impenetrable veil. We do not know what is to befall us, what circumstances will surround us, what temptations we shall meet, what work is to be done, what dangers incurred, what trials endured. Ask almost any successful man and he will tell you that he is not exactly what he expected to be, nor doing the work he had planned to do. No mortal could have foretold the course of his life or the way God would lead him.

ILLUSTRATION. There is a little poem in which we are compared to an engineer on a steamship down deep in the vessel where he cannot see the way, but he obeys the orders of the pilot, who is above and who does see. So we, ignorant of the future and its dangers, may yet follow him who knows all and guides safely.

"And so in the wearisome journey
Over life's troubled sea,

I know not the way I am going,
But Jesus shall pilot me."
Foster's Cyclopædia of Poet. Ill., 3619.

3. OUR GUIDE THROUGH THE WILDERNESS. "We are still guided by the cloud, which to us may represent the providential indications of God's will, and by the ark, which to us may represent the injunctions of the Word and the obligations of the covenant. Happy shall we be, and peaceful and noble our lives, if we strive to watch as carefully for God's guidance, and to obey it as swiftly when it is plain, and be as content to suspend action if it is not, as was the host of Israel in the love of its youth, when it went after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Obedience — swift, unconditional obedience at whatever time the summons comes, or to whatever tasks it may summon — is called for from us, even more than from Israel of old." — *Maclaren in Sunday School Times*.

Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Word of God, is our pillar of cloud and fire. He has come to be the light of the world. He teaches us the way to heaven, and shows the way by having walked in it. He is wise and strong, knowing all things present, past, and future, for he is divine. He shines through the Word, giving light in the darkness. He

abides upon his church, and in the temple of each loving heart. He leads us by his providence, by his Spirit, by the principles of his Word, by his example. All who follow him will reach the Promised Land.

We have the experience of past ages, we have the clear revelation of Christianity. This way of getting directions from God is vastly higher than the way vouchsafed to the Israelites. It requires more manliness, and it develops a loftier character.

ILLUSTRATION. A young lady once said to Dr. Dunning that she thought the greatest trial and test of a railroad engineer must be to find amid the vast network and tangle of tracks as he approached the station, which one of them to choose. She was surprised to learn that the guidance to the right tracks was decided by a higher authority, and all the engineer had to do was to care for his engine and keep on going.

ILLUSTRATION. Mammoth Cave is a labyrinth of winding paths, two hundred miles in length, in different stories, one below another. On every side are dangers and pitfalls — here the Bottomless Pit, there the Maelstrom, here Scylla, and there Charybdis; “the Black Hole,” and the Dead Sea, the Corkscrew — a winding ascent from a lower to a higher level. The darkness is absolute; it can almost be felt. No one can find his way without a guide. If left behind it is not safe to move. A friend once got left behind and was alone in the dark, and the twenty minutes seemed an eternity. Some of our party lingered behind, and then we heard them calling to us that they had lost their way. We could see their lights and hear their voices, but they did not know the way to us. After we had gone some little distance into its depths, we came to a hall called the Methodist Church. Here one of the guides mounted a high rock and called our attention to a short sermon he wished to preach. The sermon was,

KEEP CLOSE TO YOUR GUIDE.

And we soon found that the only safety was in giving careful heed to the guide’s sermon. And we found, too, that the best place was near the guide, where we could hear most plainly his descriptions and stories connected with the places. Jesus is our guide. He never leads us into bad places or wrong-doings. Sometimes he guides in strange ways, but always the best ways in the end.

“Through the night of doubt and sorrow,
Onward goes the pilgrim band,
Singing songs of expectation,
Marching to the Promised Land.

Clear before us through the darkness
Gleams and burns the guiding light:
Brother clasps the hand of brother,
Stepping fearless through the night.”

4. **OUR NEED OF HUMAN HELPERS.** The wise person always seeks the aid of the more experienced, as Moses desired the help of Hobab. Get all the help you can from parents, teachers, friends. You will have enough to do to find the right way and to do the right thing, after you have received all they can give you.

LESSON IX. — September 1.

THE TWO REPORTS OF THE SPIES.

Numbers 13: 17-20, 23-33.

READ Numbers 13, 14. COMMIT vs. 30, 31.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The Lord is with us: fear them not.* — NUM. 14: 9.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Compare the three parallel accounts. Numbers 13 and 14; and Deut. 1; the story

of Caleb, in Josh. 14: 6-15; and the use made of this story in Heb. 3: 7-4: 3.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

This lesson has a double attraction for children, for it contains a very picturesque story, and also a series of rambles for the travel club through Palestine from south to north with the twelve spies. Let the

scholars trace the journeys on the map and at each stopping place tell all they can about the city and what took place there.

The lesson may well begin by the scholars telling the story, and correcting one another by addition or by changes.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The story of the finding of *Kadesh-barnea* in *The Life-story of Henry Clay Trumbull*, by Philip E. Howard, is very stirring. *International Critical Commentary* on Numbers and on Deuteronomy.

Expositor's Bible on Numbers and the other commentaries.

Wm. M. Taylor's *Moses the Lawgiver*, "The report of the spies."

T. B. Meyer's *Moses, the Servant of God*, "A bitter disappointment."

Trumbull's *Kadesh-barnea* (Scribner's) is the classic on this lesson. Palmer's *Desert of the Exodus* (Harper's). Robinson's *The Land and the Book* has many valuable descriptions. Edersheim's *Wanderings in the Desert*.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Have I searched out the blessings of the Christian life and decided to enter upon it now?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Refusing to Enter Upon the New Life.

I. THE ENCAMPMENT ON THE BORDER OF THE PROMISED LAND.

II. THE INVESTIGATION. SHALL WE GO UP NOW AND GAIN OUR INHERITANCE? (vs. 1-25.)

The call to go and take possession.
The people are afraid.
The committee of investigation.

III. THE TWO REPORTS (vs. 26-33).

The majority report.
The minority report.

IV. THE FATAL DECISION (Numbers 14).

The decision.
The consequences.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

LEARN BY HEART.

V. 30; 1 Cor. 2: 9; Num. 14: 7, 8.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Jerusalem the golden."
"O Paradise! O Paradise!"

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Ellen M. H. Gates' poem, "The Grapes of Eshcol."

Homer N. Dunning's "Ho ye! ho ye! we return from the land."

Bunyan's Pilgrim as he discoursed of the Celestial City and as he rested in Beulah Land. The hymn, "Beulah Land."

Lowell's "Present Crisis."

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — July or August, "The time of the first ripe grapes" (Num. 13: 20); B. C. 1490 by the common chronology.

This was two or three months after they left Sinai on the twentieth day of the second month, sometime in May.

Place. — Kadesh-barnea. An eleven days journey (Deut. 1: 2) of continued travel, as modern travelers have found (Robinson was exactly eleven days); i. e., 160 or 170 miles route from Sinai.

It is 50 miles south of Beersheba on the southern border of Palestine. (See Driver, *International Critical Commentary on Deuteronomy*.)

HOME WORK**AND CLASS DISCUSSION.**

Kadesh-barnea.

Its relation to the promised land.

Why the people hesitated to go on.

What the spies found out.

What was the evil in the majority report?

Why was the minority report good and true?

What was the punishment of those who refused to go on?

How does this story illustrate the Christian life?

I. The Encampment at the Base of the Hills of the Promised Land. — For two or three months the people of Israel, men, women, and children, slowly marched through "the great and terrible wilderness" from Sinai, a journey which ordinary travelers could make in eleven days. The slow march and long rests were necessary both on account of the children and the flocks, and on account of the need of longer training. Moreover, the difficulties and privations of the desert would make them more anxious to enter the "land flowing with milk and honey."

Kadesh-barnea. At length, sometime in July or August, they reached Kadesh-barnea, *Ain Qadees*, 50 miles south of Beersheba, just at the foot of the range of hills which are the southern boundary of Palestine.

"From Kadesh the people can see, rising before them toward the northwest, the steep ascent which leads into the hill country, the destined inheritance of the tribe of Judah."

17. And Mō'ses sent them to spy out the land of Cā'nāan, and said unto them, Get you up this ^{way} ^{1 southward,} ^{by the South,} and go up into ^{2 the} ^{mountain :} ^{mountains :}

¹ V. 21.

² Gen. 14: 10; Judg. 1: 9, 19.

This site was lost for many years till it was rediscovered by Trumbull in 1881, and the identification, says Professor Driver, "is now generally accepted." The account of the discovery is fascinating.

"It was a marvelous sight," wrote Dr. Trumbull. "Out from the barren and desolate stretch of the burning desert-waste, we had come with magical suddenness into an oasis of verdure and beauty, unlooked for, and hardly conceivable in such a region. A carpet of grass covered the ground. Fig trees, laden with fruit nearly ripe enough for eating, were along the shelter of the southern hillside. Shrubs and flowers showed themselves in variety and profusion. Running water gurgled under the waving grass. . . .

"Standing out from the earth-covered limestone hills at the north-eastern sweep of this picturesque recess was to be seen the 'large single mass, or a small hill, of solid rock' which Rowlands looked at as the cliff smitten by Moses, to cause it to 'give forth his water' when its flowing stream had been exhausted. From underneath this ragged spur of the northeasterly mountain range issued the now abundant stream."



From a Photograph by Wilson.

Kadesh-barnea.

As located by Dr. Trumbull.

II. The Investigation. Shall They Go Up Now and Take Possession of Their Inheritance? — Vs. 1-25; Deut. 1: 19-25. The gates to their new home were before them, wide open. The fertile oasis to which they had come was a foretaste of their inheritance. Only a steep climb and they can set their feet on the land of promise.

THE SUMMONS TO GO AND CONQUER. Then Moses said unto them: **Behold, Jehovah thy God hath set the land before thee: go up take possession, as Jehovah, the God of thy fathers, hath spoken unto thee; fear not, neither be dismayed.** (Deut. 1: 21.)

They had only to trust God and go forward, and in less than two years from leaving Egypt the land would have been theirs. The God who had delivered them with a mighty hand, who had made a path through the sea, who had rained manna, and brought water from a rock, and spoken from Sinai, and entered into covenant with them, and was leading them by his visible presence, — he bade them go up and take possession of the promised land. They should have trusted and obeyed.

THE PEOPLE WERE AFRAID to go forward. They were not a warlike people. Abraham's attack on Chedorlaomer and his army in rescue of Lot, in the far distant past, and their battle with the Amalekites, a year before this time, are the only battles recorded in the whole history of their race. The whole people (Deut. 1: 22) asked Moses to first send out spies to investigate. This was wise under the circumstances, that is, the next wisest thing to going forward trusting in God, and therefore Moses agreed to the plan (Deut. 1: 23), and it was so directed by God (Num. 13: 1, 2).

THE COMMITTEE OF INVESTIGATION. Accordingly, Moses selected twelve leading men best fitted for the service, whose names are given in vs. 4-15.

17. Spy out the land. The object of this expedition was (1) to learn what were the

18. And see the land, what it ^{is}; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they ^{be} strong or weak, whether they ^{be} few or many;

19. And what the land ^{is} that they dwell in, whether it ^{be} good or bad; and what cities ^{they be} that they dwell in, whether in ^{tents, camps,} or in strong holds;

20. And what the land ^{is}, whether it ^{be} ¹fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And ²be ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time ^{was} the time of the first ripe grapes.

23. ³And they came unto the ^{brook valley} of Esh'cōl, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it ^{between two upon a staff; and upon a staff between two;} they brought ^{also} of the pomegranates, and of the figs.

24. ^{The} That place was called the ^{brook valley of} ^aEsh'cōl, because of the cluster of grapes which the children of Is'ra-el cut down from thence.

25. And they returned from ^{searching of spying out} the land ^{after} at the end of forty days.

26. And they went and came to Mō'ses, and to Aar'on, and to all the congregation of the children of Is'ra-el, ⁴unto the wilderness of Pā'ran, to ⁵Kā'desh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land.

¹ Neh. 9: 25, 35; Ezek. 34: 14.

² Deut. 31: 6.

³ Deut. 1: 24.

⁴ V. 3.

⁵ Num. 20: 1, 16; Deut. 1: 19.

^a That is, *A cluster*.

attractions of the country; (2) the difficulties in the way of taking possession; (3) the best ways of reaching the country; (4) the preparations it was necessary to make. **Get you up this way southward.** Better as in R. V., by the South, not referring at all to the direction from the Israelites' camp, but to a well-defined tract of territory forming the southernmost and least fertile portion of the land of Canaan. It was called "The *Negeb*" or The South Country, literally, "the dryness." In the same way we speak of the "The South," no matter in what direction we approach it, or of South Boston, or Southern Illinois. **Into the mountain,** the mountainous region.

19. Whether in tents, *i. e.*, open villages and camps like the Bedouin Arabs, or in strong holds: walled cities and strongholds.

20. Bring of the fruit of the land, to show its fertility and quality.

It is not at all probable that they went in one band, as that would have excited suspicion. They probably scattered in various directions, going as Egyptian travelers, for the Egyptians had held this country under their control at times, and were familiar figures, though, according to Professor Sayce, at this time "Palestine had ceased to become an Egyptian province, and neither Babylonians nor Assyrians were strong enough to mingle in its politics." Such a spying military expedition is reported to have been made in the time of Thothmes III.

There appears from the narrative to have been a division of the spies into two companies. One under the leadership of the warrior General Joshua went through the whole length of Palestine 300 miles from Kadesh to the pass between Lebanon mountains, "the entering in of Hamath" (v. 21), a city north of Damascus. The other under the leadership of Caleb, a very shrewd observer, went only about 100 miles as far as Hebron and the Eshcol valley a little beyond it. Caleb, in that case, returned first, and is mentioned alone in Num. 13: 30; 14: 24 as making a brave report; while Joshua, taking the longer journey, afterwards joined Caleb in his courageous stand (Num. 14: 6, 7).

THE FRUITS BROUGHT BACK were figs, pomegranates, a juicy fruit of fine flavor about the size of an orange; and grapes, one cluster of which found in Eshcol was so large that they bare it between two upon a staff (v. 23). This arrangement was not chiefly on account of the weight of the cluster, but in order to prevent the grapes from being crushed in carrying. "Kitto (*Phys. History of Palestine*, p. 330) states that a bunch of grapes of enormous size was produced at Welbeck from a Syrian vine, and sent as a present in 1819 from the Duke of Portland to the Marquis of Rockingham. It weighed nineteen pounds, and was conveyed to its destination, more than 20 miles distant, on a staff by four laborers, two of whom bore it in rotation."—Cook. "The arrangement referred to in the text was probably made, not because the weight was too great for one person to carry, but in order to prevent the grapes from being crushed."—Ellicott. "In 1845, Dr. Mitchell, of

27. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with ¹milk and honey; ²and this ^{is} the fruit of it.

28. Nevertheless ³the people ^{be strong} that dwell in the land ^{are strong,} and the cities ^{are walled,} and very great: and moreover we saw ⁴the children of A'nāk there.

29. ⁵The Am'a-lek-ites dwell in the land of the south: and the Hittites, and the Jeb'u-sites, Am'a-lek dwell South: Hittite, and the Jeb'u-site, Am'or-ites, dwell in the mountains: and the Ca'naan-ites dwell by the sea, and ^{along} by the ^{coast} side of Jor'dan. Ca'naan-ite dwell

¹ Ex. 3: 8.² Deut. 1: 25.³ Deut. 1: 28.⁴ V. 33.⁵ Ex. 17: 8; Num. 14: 43;

Judg. 6: 3.

Philadelphia, grew a cluster of grapes that was *two feet four and five-eighths inches* in length and *three feet* across the shoulders or wings. The vine was only three years of age. Have we any record of a larger bunch? — *Massachusetts Ploughman*. "The heaviest bunch of black grapes that has ever been recorded weighed twenty-three pounds, five ounces; length, twenty-four inches; and width across the shoulders, twenty-two inches." — *Boston Cultivator*, 1881.

III. The Two Reports. — Vs. 26-33; Deut. 1: 26-33.

FIRST. THE MAJORITY REPORT. The investigators were gone forty days and seem to have made a pretty thorough exploration.

(1) V. 27. The land **floweth with milk and honey**. As proof thereof they showed specimens of its fruits.

(2) V. 28. But this land was guarded by strong and warlike peoples.

(3) There were giants there, **children of Anak**, called giants in v. 33, and **we were in our own sight as grasshoppers**.

"A class of bandits whose names inspired terror throughout the district. The great stature of these men, exaggerated by common report, together with stories of their ferocity, seem to have impressed the timid Hebrews beyond measure." — *Watson*. Goliath of Gath is supposed to be a remnant of these Anakim giants.

(4) The lands were defended by (v. 28) **cities . . . walled, and very great** and the Israelites had no means of warfare with which to capture them. "The walled cities of Canaan were not easily taken by the armies of Egypt, in the campaigns of Thothmes III., of Setee I., and of Rameses II." "On the walls of Karnak," in the words of the *Sunday School Times*, "there are pictured representations of the conflicts for the possession of some of those walled cities of Canaan, which show that their conquest was no slight matter, even for the strongest empire of the then known world. The Israelites knew something of such defences from their experiences and observations in Egypt. They had themselves been the builders of walls of fortification, which were deemed inpregnable to any hostile force."

29. **Amalekites**, a wandering tribe of Bedouins of the desert. The Israelites had met some of them in battle a year before this (Ex. 17: 8-16).

And the Hittites. A powerful, far-reaching people, whose remains have lately been discovered. They are represented on the Egyptian monuments (*Sayce*) as "an ugly race, with yellow skins, black hair and eyes, receding foreheads, and protrusive upper jaws." **And the Jebusites**. Possibly, as Driver suggests, a sub-tribe of the Canaanites. Jerusalem was their center, and they held it until



Pomegranate.
Blossom and fruit.

30. And ¹ Cā'leb stilled the people before Mō'ses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

31. ² But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they ^{are} stronger than we.

32. And they ³ brought up an evil report of the land which they had ^{searched} ^{spied out} unto the children of Is'ra-el, saying, The land, through which we have gone to ^{search it, is} ^{spy it out, is} a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and ⁴ all the people that we saw in it ^{are} ^{are} men of ^a great stature.

33. And there we saw the ^{giants,} ^{Neph'ti-lim,} ⁵ the sons of A'nāk, ^{which come} ^{which come} of the ^{giants:} ^{Neph'ti-lim:} and we were in our own sight ⁶ as grasshoppers, and so we were ⁷ in their sight.

¹ Num. 14: 6, 24; Josh. 14: 7.

⁴ Amos 2: 9.

⁶ Isa. 40: 22.

² Num. 32: 9; Deut. 1: 28.

⁵ Deut. 1: 28.

⁷ 1 Sam. 17: 42.

³ Num. 14: 36, 37.

the time of David. **And the Amorites.** Mountaineers, depicted on the Egyptian monuments (*Sayce*) as a tall race, with fair skins, light (also black) hair, and blue eyes. **And the Canaanites.** These occupied the lowlands, along the Mediterranean and the Jordan. "The name of Canaan is derived from a root signifying 'to bow down,' and means 'the lowlands' of Palestine." — *Sayce in Hastings' Bible Dictionary*.

(5) V. 32. **A land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof.** The land itself is unsafe, and would destroy our people by its conditions unfavorable to health, from bad water, scarcity of water, malaria, or the plague. In most modern wars more die of disease than in battle. Many an army has thus been eaten up by the land. Mrs. Howie, of Syria, says in the *Sunday School Times* that she "thinks the passage is sufficiently explained by the dearly bought experience of 'the people of Israel' in the battle fought 'in the wood of Ephraim,' for of the twenty thousand men slain there, it is said 'the forest devoured [ate up] more people that day than the sword devoured' (2 Sam. 18: 8). By 'wood' we understand a wild, rocky region, overgrown with trees and thorny shrubs, dense and almost impenetrable in some places, and especially full of danger to any one being pursued, as was Absalom."

So far both reports would agree, except in the possible exaggerations from the fears of these ten investigators.

(6) But that which chiefly made this an **evil report** was their assertion (v. 31) **We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we.** It was distrust of their God and his promises, such distrust as led them to refuse to obey his order to go up and conquer. They forgot what God had done for them. They forgot that "one, with God, is a majority." Without God they would have utterly failed, as they would have failed in escaping from Egypt. With God they could have "done all things."

The timid spies were like Elisha's servant (2 Kings 6: 16, 17), who saw the enemy, but did not see the heavenly chariots and horsemen ranged on the hills round about. They saw the giants, but were blind to God.

The report was evil because it omitted the essential factor in the case.

SECOND. THE MINORITY REPORT of Caleb and Joshua was a good report because, while it accepted all the material facts of the other, it embodied the one essential of faith in God with its outcome of obedience and courage.

ILLUSTRATION. The difference between the two lay in this: that the ten looked at God through the difficulties, as when you look at the sun through a reversed telescope, and it seems indefinitely distant and shorn of its glory; while the two looked at difficulties through God. — *F. B. Meyer*.

Moses himself urged the people, and showed how this later report was the true one.

"Then I said unto you, Dread not, neither be afraid of them. Jehovah your God who goeth before you, he will fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes, and in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that Jehovah thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came unto this place. Yet in this thing ye did not believe Jehovah your God, who went before you in the way, to seek you out a place to pitch your tents in, in fire by night, to show you by what way ye should go, and in the cloud by day" (Deut. 1: 29-33).

IV. The Fatal Decision and Its Consequences.—Numbers 14. **THE DECISION.** The people took the view of the majority, and refused to go up and take possession. They exclaimed, Would God we had died in Egypt! Would God we had died in the wilderness! They actually revolted against Moses, and chose a captain to lead them back to Egypt. They undertook to stone Joshua and Caleb. Then the glory of the Lord shone out from the Tabernacle.

THE CONSEQUENCES. The men that slandered the land, the ten men who brought the evil report, perished by the plague.

All the rest of the men over twenty years old were to perish in the wilderness during the forty years of discipline of the nation, and not one of them was to reach the promised land, save only Joshua and Caleb (perhaps not including the Levites. Compare Num. 14: 29 with Num. 1: 45, 46 and Num. 26: 63-65).

"There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.

Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."
—Julius Cesar, *Act IV., Sc. 3.*

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side:
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that light."
—Lowell, *Present Crisis.*

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. God is leading us each one toward the Promised Land, the heavenly character, and the heavenly life. The true Christian life is a land of promise and of fulfilment; a land with the great clusters of Eshcol, rich, luscious, and abundant fruits, — heavenly experiences, love, joy, peace, faith, longsuffering, charity, and every good.

2. God summons us to go up NOW, immediately, and possess the land, eternal life began in this world and in our youth. It is foolish to wait and make a long and dreary journey through the wilderness of sin.

3. It is right that we should know the difficulties and dangers and self-denials, as well as the good things in the land to which we are called.

But there are difficulties in the way of obtaining these blessings, — giants of evil, of passion, of selfishness, of intemperance; enemies entrenched in walled cities of custom, prejudice, sinful hearts, wealth, fashion, ignorance.

Every real good, like success, education, usefulness, has great difficulties and many enemies in the way, but also sends forward, to those seeking, specimens of its grapes of Eshcol and blessed fruits.

4. Every Christian is making some kind of report to the world.

5. Those make an evil report who see the enemies more clearly than the goodness of the land, and than the power and love of God; who magnify the evils and belittle the blessings; who have little faith in God, and forget all his wondrous works in the past; and who, by their sinful and imperfect lives and ceaseless complaints, declare that God cannot conquer evil for them.

Those who bring an evil report are punished by being excluded from that land of blessings which they had not faith to conquer.

"For of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these, 'It might have been.'"
—Whittier.

ILLUSTRATION. Mr. Spurgeon tells a story of a man who was invited to come into an orchard and eat some of the fruit. He refused, for he said that he had picked up some of the apples by the roadside that fell from those trees, and they were poor and bitter. The owner replied that those trees were placed there on purpose, so that the boys would not be attracted into the orchard to steal. But come inside, and there the apples are delicious.

Thus some Christians, by murmuring, by disagreeable manner, by unpleasant habits, by conduct bordering on the wrong, make an evil report of what is really the Christian life. So also there are those who notice only the false professors and the faults of true professors, and hence refuse to become Christians.

"Folly and Fear are sisters twain,
One closing her eyes,
The other peopling the dark inane
With spectral lies."

"Know well, my soul, God's hand controls
Whate'er thou fearest;
Round him in calmest music rolls
Whate'er thou hearest."

"Unbelief never gets beyond the difficulties—the cities, the walls, the giants. It is always preferring them, dwelling on them, pitting them against its own resources. Faith, on the other hand, though it never minimizes the difficulties, looks them steadily in the face, turns from them and looks up into the face of God, and counts on him. This is what the people failed to do, and for this they lost Canaan." — *F. B. Meyer*.

6. Those make a good report who see these enemies as well as the blessedness of the land, but also see the power and the love of God which can give strength to overcome them, and who prove that the enemies can be overcome by overcoming them; and who also show by their holy lives and deeds of love how good the land is. It seems impossible to overcome them. Man cannot overcome them alone. But with God's help we can attack them boldly and conquer them. Faith and courage can do wonders. Without these we must wander the forty years in the wilderness.

"Oh, how many a glorious record
Had the angels of me kept,

Had I done instead of doubted,
Had I warred instead of wept."

Those who bring a good report to the world are blessed by inheriting the very blessings of which they have had a foretaste.

What we need is a more vivid realization of the blessings of God and his kingdom; to feel them so deeply, so enthusiastically, that men will believe in our Saviour and the reality of his promises. We need the inspiration of a revival.

LESSON X. — September 8.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT. — Numbers 21: 1-9.

READ Numbers 21, 22. COMMIT v. 9.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.* — JOHN 3: 14, 15.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. Make a list of the intervening events during the 38 years between the last lesson,—the report of the spies, and the refusal of the people to go up and possess the land,—and the experience of the present lesson. Study the effect of these in the

training of the Israelites. See also Deut. 1: 46; 2: 1; 8: 1-5.

2. Make a study of faith in Jesus from the various statements about it in the New Testament,—what it is. How it is the means of salvation. Why it is necessary.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

All roads in the great ancient Roman Empire led to the Golden Milestone in the center of the city. So everything in this lesson leads to the glory-crowned cross, the center of the world's history and the world's progress. Let us delay on this illustrative story which Christ himself applies only so far as to make the great truth which it illustrates more real, more clear, more inspiring, guiding to faith and salvation.

LEARN BY HEART.

V. 9; John 3: 14, 15; Isa. 45: 22; John 12: 32.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Will I now trust in Christ for forgiveness of sin, devoting myself wholly to him?

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Marcus Dods in *Expositor's Bible* on John 3: 14, 15. Stanley's *History of the Jewish Church*. Meyer's volume on Moses, and the article on the brazen serpent in the various dictionaries of the Bible.

A realistic description of the Israelites' wilderness life in Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, vol. II., is full of interesting things to tell the class. Walker's *Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation*. Peloubet's *Suggestive Illustrations* on John 3: 14, 15 (Holman). Trumbull on serpent symbolism in *The Threshold Covenant* (Scribner's).

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, where the burden rolled off at the sight of the cross. *Poems* by Bonar, "The Substitute," "The Sin-bearer."

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—More than 38 years after our last lesson.

Aaron died on the 1st day of the 5th month (July-August) of the 40th year since leaving Egypt (Num. 33: 38).

The fiery serpents attacked the people a few weeks later, in September (B. C. 1452, according to the common chronology).

Place.—Aaron died at Mt. Hor, on the border of the Edom range, along the eastern border of the Arabah.

The serpents were in the great deep and broad valley called the Arabah, south of the Dead Sea, and extending to the eastern arm of the Red Sea.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: An Object-Lesson of Salvation from Sin.

I. THE GATHERING OF THE CLANS AT KADESH-BARNEA (Num. 20: 1; Deut. 2: 14).

II. THE FORWARD MOVEMENT TO PALESTINE (Num. 20: 14—21: 3).

Two ways shut up.

- (1) The Edomites forbid.
- (2) The Canaanites attack.

III. MURMURINGS IN THE DESERT. THE SIN (vs. 4, 5).

The hard journey.
The people discouraged.
The outburst of unbelief.
Thou art the man.

IV. THE PUNISHMENT (v. 6).

The fiery serpents of sin.

V. REPENTANCE AND SALVATION.

The brazen serpent.
Repentance. Prayer. Cure.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"My faith looks up to thee,"
"In the cross of Christ I glory."

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The gathering at Kadesh.
The route and why they took it.
What discouraged the people.
How it came from unbelief.
The fiery serpents.
How this led to repentance.
Why faith was the condition of cure.
The "Golden Text."

I. The Gathering of the Clans at Kadesh-barnea, Num. 20: 1; Deut. 2: 14. We left the Israelites, in our last lesson, at Kadesh-barnea, on the border of the South land of Palestine and the northern border of the great desert of Paran. They had refused, through fear and unbelief, to go up and take possession of their inheritance, and were condemned to remain in the desert for 38 years longer, till all over 20 years of age had died. They arrived at Kadesh about a year and three months after the exodus, and left it nine months before taking possession of Canaan. During these years "Kadesh was probably their central nucleus or rendezvous. They would naturally change their locality from time to time, like the Bedouins of all ages, but still cherishing the hope of eventually becoming possessors of the land of promise. Meantime they are not to be conceived as dwelling, in their intervals of repose, in a compact camp, which the nature of the country forbade to such an immense multitude, but as expatiating in bands, here and there, over the adjacent country, still having the tabernacle as the center and the rendezvous to which they would return."—*Bush*. Some of these wanderings are given in Num. 33: 19-36, extending as far south as Ezion Geber on the eastern arm of the Red Sea (1 Kings 9: 26).

Some of the events recorded during this period are:

1. *Korah's Rebellion* (Numbers 16), which grew out of the long delay and disappointed hopes.

1. And ^{when} ¹ king A'rad the Ca'naan-ite, ^{which} dwelt in the ^{South,} ^{South,} heard tell that Is'ra-el came ² by the way of ^{the spies; then} ^{Ath'a-rim; and} he fought against Is'ra-el, and took ^{some} ^{some} of them ^{prisoners.} ^{captive.}

2. ³ And Is'ra-el vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then ⁴ I will utterly destroy their cities.

3. And the LORD hearkened to the voice of Is'ra-el, and delivered up the Ca'nāan-ites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: and ^{he called} the name of the place ^{was called} "Hormah."

¹ Num. 33: 40; Judg. 1: 16.

² Num. 13: 21.

³ Gen. 28: 20; Judg. 11: 30.

⁴ Lev. 27: 28.

^a That is, utter destruction.

2. Aaron's rod budded (Numbers 17) to prove that Aaron was the divinely chosen high priest.

3. The death of Miriam, the sister of Moses (Num. 20: 1).

4. Water from the rock at Meribah and the sin of Moses that kept him from entering the promised land (Num. 20: 2-13).

II. The Forward Movement to Palestine, Num. 20: 14-21: 3. When the time came to leave Kadesh and start anew on the journey which began when the Israelites left Egypt almost 40 years before, two ways were still open before them.

THE FIRST WAY was to march eastward along the borders of the desert to the southern end of the Dead Sea, and then turn northward along its eastern coast. (See map.) There was one great obstacle to this course. Along the eastern border of the Dead Sea, and continuing along the great valley of the Arabah which extends below it southward to the eastern arm of the Red Sea, runs a steep range of mountains called Mt. Seir. This mountain range must be crossed by the Israelites. But it was held by the large and powerful clan of Edomites, descendants of Esau.

From Kadesh Moses sent a delegation to the Edomites to ask permission to cross their territory, promising to go only by the highway, tramping down no fields, destroying no vineyards, and paying for any water they should use from the wells. The Edomites refused, and threatened war if any attempt should be made. Compare the refusal of Cesar to grant the Helvetii the permission they sought to cross quietly through a part of Gaul under Roman influence; the refusal being accompanied by a display of force.

Hence the Israelites turned south down the Arabah valley toward the Red Sea in order to go around the mountain range and the Edomite territory. On the way, at Mt. Hor, one of the chief mountains of this range, Aaron died.

THE OTHER WAY was to go northward from Kadesh by the route the spies had taken 38 years before up through the South land.

1. King Arad the Canaanite. Better as in R. V., "the Canaanite, the king of Arad," a district in the South country of Palestine along the borders of the desert, and through which they must pass if they went to the heart of Palestine by this route.

Heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies. "Atharim" (R. V.) may mean "spies," or it may be the name of some unknown locality. He feared that the report was true, and that Israel might take that route, since the Edomites had blocked up the other route.

This story seems to belong before the death of Aaron at Mt. Hor, for that is too far away. It probably belongs at Num. 20: 22, not because it is out of place where it is, but because the writer there went on with his subject, and now turns back to that starting-point. Then. In the early part of the journey from Kadesh to Mt. Hor. He fought against Israel, and took some of the stragglers on the outskirts of the multitude prisoners.

2. Then Israel vowed a vow, etc. They promised to do what they and their fathers had failed to do 38 years before in obeying God's command to go up into Canaan and take possession of it. It was not a bargain with God, but an act of obedience, even in the face of difficulties. They had repented and confessed, and determined to obey.

3. And they utterly destroyed them and their cities. This probably occurred in the later time referred to in Josh. 12: 14; Judg. 1: 16, 17. And he called the name of the place Hormah. "A devoted thing," "something vowed." It was about 25 miles south of Beersheba, in the South land.

4. And ¹they journeyed from mount Hor by the way ^{of} to the Red ^{sea,} Sea, to ²compass the land of E'dom: and the soul of the people was much ^adiscouraged because of the way.

5. And the people ³spake against God, and against Mō'ses, ⁴Wherefore have ye brought us up out of E'gypt to die in the wilderness? for ^{there is} no bread, ^{neither is there any} and there is no water; and ⁵our soul loatheth this light bread.

¹ Num. 20: 22.

² Judg. 11: 18.

³ Psa. 78: 19.

⁴ Ex. 16: 3; 17: 3.

⁵ Num. 11: 6.

^a Or, was impatient. Hebrew, was shortened.

III. Murmurings in the Desert. The Sin. — Vs. 4, 5.

THE HARD JOURNEY. 4. And they journeyed from mount Hor, after the death of Aaron, by the way of the Red sea. That is, they went southward down the Arabah Valley directly away from Canaan, parallel with the Edomite range till they came to the Red Sea, where the mountain range ended so that they could cross it eastward beyond the Edomite country, and then turn northward, and so compass, *i. e.*, go around, the land of Edom.

THE PEOPLE DISCOURAGED. And the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.

1. The way was very difficult and hard to endure. They were marching through a most desolate region, the worst portion of the plain called the Arabah, "often troubled by sand storms from the Red Sea." "The surface is in general loose gravel and stones, everywhere furrowed and torn with the beds of torrents. Now and then a lone shrub of the ghudah is almost the only trace of vegetation." — *Robinson*. "The heat also is almost unbearable, and the terrible sirocco seems constantly blowing." The suffering must have been great.

2. They were in danger from the Edomites, who might at any time send bands of armed marauders from the mountains which skirted the whole route, and make sudden raids upon the defenceless people. So the Scotch Highlanders used to raid the lowlands as described often by Sir Walter Scott.

3. Water was scarce, and there was very little fruit or vegetable food, almost nothing except the daily manna, (v. 5) and our soul loatheth this light bread.

4. To make all this far worse was the fact that they were going directly away from the promised land, with a great barrier of mountain and sea and warrior bands shutting them out.

5. They were losing faith in their leaders and in God's promises. Aaron had died. Moses was then 119 years old. They forgot that God had delivered them out of a similar, but far more dangerous trouble, when they escaped from Egypt. They forgot former hungers when God gave them food, and former thirsts when God gave them water, and how he "bare them as a nursing father in the wilderness" (Acts 13: 18, R. v. margin). They only faintly discerned God's providence and

"A finger's breadth at hand can mar
A world of light in heaven afar,
A mote eclipse a glorious star."



From a Photograph by Wilson.

The Gulf of Akabah.

One of the wildest wadies in Arabia, known as Wady Arabah.

When Longfellow sang, "Learn to labor and to wait," he knew well that the latter is the harder. It is not toil, but hope deferred, Canaan postponed, that makes the heart sick.

The first telegram ever flashed along the electric wires in America was the message said of Jacob and Israel, "*What hath God wrought!*" (Num. 23: 23.)

THE OUTBURST OF UNBELIEF. And the people spake against God, and against Moses. Their bitter feelings grew so strong that they were expressed in words. Their former murmurings at Kadesh had been treated leniently, and water had been supplied, apparently at their angry demand. They seem not to have interpreted the miracle there as an instance of mercy in spite of their wicked course, but as a response to it; and they therefore now repeated the experiment of insurrection. **Out of Egypt to die in the wilderness.** Compare Byron's *Prisoner of Chillon* :

"My very chains and I grew friends;
So much a long communion tends
To make us what we are, even I
Regained my freedom with a sigh."

This light bread, i. e., vile, worthless, contemptible. Thus they spake of the manna from heaven, without which they would have perished. So the very commonness of God's daily mercies, the very frequency of God's gifts of daily spiritual food, of prayer, and worship, and his Word, often prevents us from realizing their value. The dawn of morning after the night is scarcely noticed, while, if it came but once, it would outweigh in value all the world.

Thus the Israelites tempted God (1 Cor. 10: 9; Heb. 3: 9). They put his patience and forbearance to the test, and did all they could to make him give them up as hopeless.

All these things were the fruit of unbelief. They would not trust in God, though they had ten thousand proofs that he was worthy of their trust. Faith would have made all things bright, or shown the silver lining behind the clouds, and given them patience to wait for the breaking through of the light. Their unbelief led them into sin.

ILLUSTRATION. "You will remember how, in the fable, the old man, wearied with the heat and length of the way, let fall his bundle of sticks and called loudly for Death to come and put him out of misery; but when Death appeared and demanded what he wanted, the old man meekly replied, 'Good sir, I have dropped my bundle; would you be so kind as to help me to put it on my back once more?'" — *William Crawford.*

Compare *Gotthold's Emblems*, the story of Hans Priem. Stanley's *Jewish Church*, Vol. I., Lecture 8; a story about Moses from the Koran, XVIII., 64-81.

THOU ART THE MAN. Shall we condemn these men of the olden time? Yea, verily. But let us look at this story as into a mirror, and see our own life in it. How often in our sicknesses or sorrows or losses or disappointments we forget our past deliverances and blessings! How often in the low state of religion, amid attacks upon Christianity, amid persecutions and controversies concerning the Bible, amid threatening evils and public wrongs, we forget how many, many times God has delivered us and his people from far greater evils and dangers; when we should be like David who gained strength to overcome Goliath, by what God had enabled him to do to the lion and the bear.

Unbelief is not so much the disbelief of any one truth as distrusting God. But what we believe concerning God, our real creed, has much to do with our faith or want of faith in God.

"Upon the white sea sand
There sat a pilgrim band,
Telling the losses which their lives had known,
While evening waned away
From breezy cliff and bay,
And the strong tides went out with weary moan.

"One spake with quivering lip
Of a fair freighted ship,
With all his household to the deep gone down.
But one had wilder woe,
For a fair face long ago,
Lost in the darker depths of a great town.

"There were some who mourned their youth
With a most loving truth,
For its brave hopes and memories ever green;
And one upon the West
Turned an eye that would not rest,
For far-off hills whereon its joy had been.

"Some talked of vanished gold,
Some of proud honors told,
Some spake of friends that were their trust no more;
And one of a green grave,
Beside a foreign wave,
That made him sit so lonely on the shore.

"But when their tales were done,
There spake among them one,
A stranger, seeming from all sorrow free:
'Sad losses have ye met,
But mine is heavier yet,
For a believing heart hath gone from me.'

"'Alas!' these pilgrims said,
'For the living and the dead,
For fortune's cruelty, for love's sure cross,
For the wreck of land and sea,
But however it came to thee —
Thine, stranger, is life's last and heaviest loss.'"
— *Frances Brown.*

6. And ¹ the LORD sent ² fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Is'ra-el died.

7. ³ Therefore And the people came to Mō'ses, and said, We have sinned, for because ⁴ we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; ⁵ pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Mō'ses prayed for the people.

¹ 1 Cor. 10: 9.

² Deut. 8: 15.

³ Psa. 78: 34.

⁴ V. 5.

⁵ Ex. 8: 28; 1 Sam. 12: 19; 1 Kings 13: 6;

Acts 8: 24.

IV. The Punishment of Murmuring Unbelief. — V. 6. And the LORD sent.

It is not necessary to suppose that the serpents were created for this occasion, but the Lord brought them to this place, or he permitted the people in their blind obstinacy to run into them, withdrawing his protection from them. **Fiery serpents.** "Hebrew, 'the serpents, the seraphim' (the burning ones)."

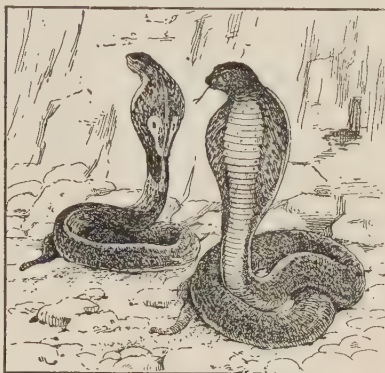
— *Elliott*. See Deut. 8: 15; Isa. 14: 29; 30: 6. (1) They may have been called "fiery" because of bright red coloring upon their heads, the glistening of the sun on their scales, and the fiery appearance of their eyes. "To this day a mottled snake, with fiery red spots upon its head, abounds at certain seasons in the Arabah." (2) Or more probably the "fiery" refers to the burning, stinging sensation caused by their bites and the accompanying inflammation. "So inflammable is its bite that it is likened to fire coming through the veins; so intense its venom, and so rapid its action, that the bite is fatal in a few hours. The body swells with a fiery eruption; the tongue is consumed with thirst; and the poor wretch writhes in agony till death brings relief." — *Biblical Illustrator*.

Tristram enumerates thirty-three species of serpents in Palestine. The desert regions abound with them. No one kind may be designated as attacking the Israelites, but any or all of the poisonous kinds, especially two: the cobra, one of the "most common and fiercest of poison-bearing snakes, seldom running from an adversary. Its length is about five or six feet." — *J. G. Wood*. "In India it is estimated that several thousand people annually die from the bite of the cobra." — *Packard's Zoology*. The other is the horned cerastes, which is "the only species which habitually darts without provocation on the passer-by."

It is exceptionally poisonous, says the *Biblica Encyclopædia*; "it frequents the sandy deserts of South Palestine, and hides in the sand or in the hollow caused by a horse's or camel's foot (Gen. 49: 17). It is an object of great terror to horses, and is thought by some to be the asp of Cleopatra."

THE FIERY SERPENTS OF SIN. No better emblem of the results of sin could have been given to the Israelites, or to us. "The true, peculiar, pernicious, fiery serpents were their murmuring disposition and complaints against Jehovah." — *Lange*. Sin is like a fiery serpent, often beautiful in appearance, and secret in its approach. But the effects are pains that only fire can express. It infects the whole system. It inflames every evil passion. It is incurable by man alone. If permitted to go on, it is death. The world is full to-day of the sorrows, the burning remorse, the agonies of the body and of the spirit which come from the fiery serpents of sin. Compare the old serpent, the devil, the tempter and destroyer of men.

V. Their Repentance and Salvation. — Vs. 7-9. CONFESSION. 7. We have sinned. The evil effects of sin made them feel conscious of their sin and its greatness. The real evil is the sin, and not the punishment. But it is only by the punishment that men realize the evil of sin itself. We cannot help measuring the judgment of any people



Egyptian Cobra.

This serpent is found on many Egyptian monuments as the emblem of immortality.

8. And the LORD said unto Mō'ses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a ^{pole:} ^{standard:} and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he ^{looketh} ^{upon} ^{it,} shall live.

9. And ¹Mō'ses made a serpent of brass, and ^{put} ^{set} it upon ^{a pole,} ^{the standard:} and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he ^{beheld} ^{looked unto} the serpent of brass, he lived.

1 2 Kings 18: 4; John 3: 14, 15.

as to the evil of sin by the severity or lightness of the punishment they inflict on various sins. And the only way in which God can impress upon men the awful evil of sin is by his terrible punishment. Therefore it is that his good laws work sorrow to those who break them. They would not be good or recognized as good unless this was their effect. **Against the LORD, and against thee.** All crimes against man are sins against God. And all sins against God work wrong to man.

PRAYER. And Moses prayed for the people, expressing their desires and feelings. There is real power in intercessory prayer. Their praying made it wise and safe to give blessings that would have been an injury to those who had not the spirit of prayer. One of the objects of the punishment was to turn their hearts to God.

Mr. Parton, in giving an account of inebriate asylums, states the principles which must lie at the basis of reformation. (1) Men of the better class will not go there at all till they have tried to reform and failed enough times to know *that they cannot* save themselves. (2) There is no hope for them except by so complete a repentance that they totally abstain from strong drink.

THE CURE. Note in what a peculiar and yet blessed way the prayer was answered; not by removing the serpents, as they probably expected, but by a way that healed their souls as well as their bodies. So Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was not removed, but God's grace was made to abound as a blessed fruit growing on that stem.

As the sin and punishment of the Israelites were the fruits of unbelief, the true method of help was first to restore faith and then healing.

8. **Make thee a fiery serpent,** of brass (v. 9), that is, of copper or bronze, which the word usually means. **And put it upon a pole,** or standard, so that all who were bitten might see. It was conspicuous all over the camp. **Every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.** (1) The power of healing was not in the brazen serpent. "It could no more heal them than it could sting them." Had the means of cure been a merely natural remedy, the people would have trusted in that instead of in God. (2) The condition of healing was a test of their faith, and thus led them to trust in God. It is easy to imagine how it would seem useless for them merely to look at a piece of brass. (3) The power was wholly in God. This was what made the means effective. (4) The healing of their bodies in this way was a healing of their unbelief and a removal of the cause of their sin.

9. **And it came to pass.** "As the herald passed along, what a scene the camp would present! There you might see a man all but dead, raising himself upon his arm, and straining his glazed eyes, if haply he might behold the glittering symbol; yonder another, wiping away his tears of anguish to look upon the glorious object; and yonder still, a mother with her child, eagerly pointing to the flag-staff, if perchance she may fix her loved one's gaze upon the mystic healer." — Taylor.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

Repeat the "Golden Text."

THE BRAZEN SERPENT AN ILLUSTRATION OF CHRIST.

1. Its design was the same, to save suffering, sinful, dying men.

2. It was made in the form of the fiery



Horned Cerastes.

The usual habit of the Horned Cerastes is to coil itself in the impress of horse or camel's footmarks, and then dart out on any passing animal.

serpents, but was itself perfectly harmless. So Christ was made sin for us, took the form of our sinful human nature, was subject to human conditions, yet without sin.

3. Like the serpent, Christ was lifted up upon the cross to draw all men unto him. Christ crucified is the most conspicuous object in the history of the world. It is the center around which the whole moral and religious warfare of the world is gathered. It is the Aleyone around which all the stars of heaven are circling. So that both by enemies and friends the cross is made prominent, and all may hear of the Saviour.

4. The power did not lie in the brazen serpent, but in God himself who could bestow healing upon those who showed by their looking up to it at his Word that they believed in God and repented of their sin. The wood of the cross could save no one, but from the Son of God yielding up his life upon it as a sacrifice for sin there radiates every power that can touch the heart of man and draw him to his heavenly Father, to repentance and holiness and life, — love, hope, duty, fear of evil, the power of the Holy Spirit.

5. Salvation was by faith, the only way in which free pardon can be offered without increasing the sin of the world.

6. The faith that God requires is not an arbitrary, but a necessary condition of salvation. For (a) if men do not believe Christ they will not obey his instructions about heaven and the way there. (b) Faith is the test of obedience. Christ is the sum of God's character; and the test is whether we will obey *all* God's commandments, and not merely such as we may choose. (c) Faith in Christ is a test of our loyalty to God and his kingdom. It is the choosing God, not only as our Saviour, but our King. (d) Faith in Christ draws us close to him in love as our Leader and Friend. (e) Faith is the act of receiving God into the soul. (f) Faith awakens every nobler motive of the soul, — love for him who has done so much for us; duty, revealed in him who died in doing his duty; hope of like holiness and blessedness; love to men, exemplified on the cross.

7. The testimony of those who have been healed is one of the most effective means of leading others to be saved, — the testimony not only of words, but of facts, of the actual change produced by believing.

LESSON XI. — September 15.

MOSES PLEADING WITH ISRAEL.

Deuteronomy 6: 1-15.

READ Deuteronomy 5, 6. COMMIT vs. 4-7.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Beware lest thou forget the Lord.* — DEUT. 6: 12.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Read the book of Deuteronomy, chaps. 1-11, 27-34, and over against each verse of this lesson place the passages which correspond to it.

As for instance,

with vs. 1, 2, comp. chaps. 27-30;
with v. 5, comp. chap. 10;

with v. 7, comp. chap. 4: 9;
with vs. 8, 9, comp. chap. 11: 18-21;
with vs. 10, 15, comp. chaps. 7-9, 27-30.

Also at the same time mark the most notable verses; those best worthy of being committed to memory.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

In this lesson, as the last, let the Travel Club be kept busy. And especially if possible let them mold the map on the sand table, or trace it on the raised maps which may easily be obtained (especially of the Sunday-School Commission, 416 Lafayette Street, New York).

Set the children, as well as the older classes, to studying the book of Deuteronomy, and making the comparisons suggested in the "Inductive Study."

Many can find and read or repeat from memory the choicest verses in the book. For instance, Deut. 4: 9, 29, 39; 6: 4-9; 7: 9; 8: 2, 3; 26: 17; 28: 2, 8; 30: 11-14; 30: 19, 20; 32: 4, 7, 10, 31; 33: 25, 27 (last clauses).

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Will you this day love God with all your heart? (vs. 5, 6.)

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The *International Critical Commentary on Deuteronomy*, by Canon Driver, gives in the introduction the most fair and helpful exposition of the date, authorship, and construction of the book from the higher critical point of view.

Charles Kingsley's *Gospel of the Pentateuch*, chaps. 15, 16.

Wm. M. Taylor's *Moses the Lawgiver. Orations and Songs of Moses*. Introduction by Professor Moulton, and *Modern Reader's Bible* by the same author, give the most perfect and complete view of the book as a literary study of the orations of Moses.

Kipling's *Recessional*, "Lest we forget."

AGELESS HYMNS.

"I love thy kingdom, Lord."

"My God, I love thee, — not because."

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — Just before the Israelites crossed the Jordan to enter the Promised Land. A few months after the last lesson. Forty years after the Exodus. According to the margins of our Bibles, B. C. 1451.

Place. — The Israelites were encamped in the broad space between the River Jordan and the mountains of Moab, about opposite Jericho, on the eastern bank of the river. This tract has a breadth of four or five miles.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: How to Live a Successful Life.

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY.

I. THE PURPOSE AND IDEAL OF GOD FOR HIS PEOPLE (vs. 1-3).

That they live according to his wise laws. On this depends all that is of value in their new home.

II. THE INSPIRING PRINCIPLE, AT THE FOUNDATION OF RELIGION AND RIGHTEOUSNESS (vs. 4-6).

Supreme love to God.

The foundation of religion and righteousness.

III. EDUCATION IN RELIGION AND RIGHTEOUSNESS (vs. 7-9).

IV. LEST WE FORGET (vs. 10-15).

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 4-7; Deut. 8: 2, 3; 30: 19.

HOME WORK
AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The book of Deuteronomy.

What is our promised land as individuals?

What as a nation?

What is the foundation of religion and right action?

Reasons why we should love God with all our hearts.

Religious education in the home.

The dangers of prosperity.

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY.

The book of *Deuteronomy* is one of the most interesting books in the Bible from three points of view.

I. Its history is almost romantically interesting. It is the record of the noble orations of Moses as he stood on the great divide between his earthly and his heavenly life, looking as from Pisgah's top over a century of the Past crammed full of great epoch-creating events, every one shining in the light of God, and then turning his gaze upon the Future of the people.

Then six or eight centuries later came the "romantic episode" of its rediscovery, its rescue from temporary oblivion, which would be "the equivalent of a discovery," in the time of Josiah, whence ensued "the most sudden reformation movement in all history," transforming the nation.

And though "from an external reformation the masses of the people fell away," yet the effect of the book has continued to all time. "It became the chief religious literature of the people of Jehovah." "The most spiritual of the prophetic writers are deeply imbued with its thought and expressions, . . . the writings of Jeremiah are saturated with it through and through. When, centuries later, the great prophet of Nazareth appeared, even to him *Deuteronomy* was the great book of the law. Its phraseology weaves itself into his speeches, and it is almost invariably from this one book of the law that he quotes. Sentences from *Deuteronomy* rise instinctively to his lips as weapons with which to repel the tempter. And when he sums up the whole of God's law to his chosen people in two words, it is the central sentence of *Deuteronomy* which he cites as the first and great commandment." — *Professor Moulton in Introduction to Modern Reader's Bible*.

2. "In the critical discussions of our own day it is again *Deuteronomy* which is the chief storm center around which controversy rages," chiefly around the laws of *Deuteronomy*

1. Now ^{these are} ^{this is} ^{1 the commandments,} ^{the commandment,} the statutes, and the ^{judgments,} ^{judgements,} which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do ^{them} in the land whither ye go ^{over} to possess it:

2. ^{2 That} ^{that} thou mightest fear the LORD thy God, to keep all his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son's son, all the days of thy life; ³ and that thy days may be prolonged.

3. Hear therefore, O Is'ra-el, and observe to do ^{it;} ^{it;} that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, ⁴ as the LORD, ^{the} God of thy fathers hath promised ^{unto} thee, in ^{5 the} ^a land ^{that floweth} ^{flowing} with milk and honey.

¹ Deut. 4: 1; 5: 31; 12: 1.

² Ex. 20: 20; Deut. 10: 12, 13; Psa.

111: 10.

³ Deut. 4: 40; Prov. 3: 1, 2.

⁴ Gen. 15: 5.

⁵ Ex. 3: 8.

12-26. For those who wish to study the questions of historic criticism, Professor Driver's *Int. Crit. Com.* and many other books will give the desired information. And as these discussions cannot properly take up the Sunday-school hour except in very exceptional classes, we can only refer such teachers to the books devoted to them.

3. The literary study of *Deuteronomy* as a means of appreciating and teaching its great message is of far-reaching importance. It is "a collection of the orations and songs of Moses constituting his Farewell to the People of Israel," a succession of magnificent orations "wrought into the dramatic catastrophe of life, . . . orations which no other oratory ever surpassed." Professor Moulton says that he once read through on three successive days, each at a single sitting, an oration of Demosthenes, one of Burke, and the book of *Deuteronomy*, and he had the feeling at the time that neither of the other two rose to the oratorical level of the speeches of Moses.

Our lesson to-day belongs to the second oration, *Deuteronomy* 5-11. Professor Moulton thinks that at the close of this oration the Book of the Covenant,—the laws contained in *Deuteronomy* 12-26,—was recited or read; after which the book was placed beside the Ark of the Testimony in the Holy of Holies, as described in Deut. 31: 24-29.

I. **The Purpose and Ideal of God for His People.**—Vs. 1-3. FIRST. THAT THEY LIVE ACCORDING TO HIS WISE LAWS. 1. Now these are the commandments. R. v., "this is the commandment," the resumé of the ten commandments, the principles laid down, and the more individual precepts, which are presented in these his farewell addresses in the book of *Deuteronomy*. "As Deut. 11: 22 and 19: 9 show, it denotes the Deuteronomic legislation generally (especially on its moral and religious side) viewed as the expression of a single principle, the fundamental duty of Deut. 6: 5." — *Int. Crit. Com.* Judgments, decisions as to right and wrong.

2. That thou mightest fear the LORD. Fear is here "reverence, respect for rightful authority, manifesting itself in obedience." — *Century Dictionary*. There is in it an element of fear, dread of disobedience and its consequences, which grows less and less, as fast as love accomplishes the same end, till at last love casts out fear.

SECOND. ON THIS DEPENDS ALL THAT IS OF VALUE IN THEIR NEW HOME. That thy days may be prolonged, as promised in the fifth commandment. This includes long life individually and as a nation. Disobedience to God's eternal laws shortens life. And whenever the nation was driven out of their land, in whole or in part, it was always on account of their sins, as is seen in their whole history, especially in the exile to Babylon, 600 B. C., and the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, A. D. 70.

3. That ye may increase mightily. Wickedness diminishes the numbers and the power of a nation. It is not good for the world that a bad nation should become great and powerful. That floweth with milk and honey. The results of obedience to God's laws are an increase of physical blessings and comforts, the abolition of poverty, the increase of all that makes for the culture and best condition of mind and body, and increases the instrumentalities of living so as to do more good, and save earthly time for higher things.

There are those who in theory object to this presentation of worldly advantages as unworthy. They condemn the ending of the book of Job with worldly prosperity. They call it "Old Testament rewards" as contrasted with the New. But Jesus taught the same truth, and the Bible closes with outward glories as typical of soul-perfections. But

4. ¹ Hear, O Is'ra-el: the LORD our God ^{is} ^{is} one LORD:
 5. ^{And} ^{and} ² thou shalt love the LORD thy God ³ with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.
 6. And ⁴ these words, which I command thee this day, shall be ⁱⁿ upon thine heart:

¹ Isa. 42: 8; Mark 12: 29; John 17: 3.² Deut. 10: 12; Matt. 22: 37; Mark 12: 30; Luke 10: 27.³ 2 Kings 23: 25.⁴ Deut. 11: 18; Psal. 37: 31.

1. If the laws of God are good they must work out good to all who obey them. What the Old and New Testaments do is to state a fact.

2. The use of this motive cannot do injury, for the seeking these things first debars one from obtaining them.

3. They are instruments for doing good, and enlarging the usefulness of those who are sincerely seeking first the kingdom of God and its righteousness.

4. They cannot follow disobedience, because that would simply put means in the hands of the wicked to do more evil to themselves and to others.

II. The Inspiring Principle at the Foundation of Religion and Righteousness. — Vs. 4-6. **SUPREME LOVE TO GOD.** 4. **The LORD.** Jehovah (as always when printed in small capitals) the ever-living God, self-existing, the source of life. **Our God,** belonging to us, the one we worship, and who has made us what we are. **Is one LORD.** The only God. He fills the universe. There is no other who can dispute his authority, or his power. It would be a terrible thing if there were conflicting deities, some having one dominion, and others another. There would be no peace, no safety, no exaltation of soul, no assurance of hope, no eternal heaven.

5. **And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart.** The specification, "with all thine heart," and with all thy soul, and with all thy might, is intended to include every faculty that can possibly come in question. The **heart** is mentioned as the seat of the understanding (including thoughts, desires, passions, affections. — *Thayer*); "the **soul** as the center of will and personality; the **might** as representing the outgoings and energies of all the vital powers." — *Cook*. Christ quotes this as the first and great commandment (Matt. 22: 38).

REASONS FOR LOVING GOD SUPREME. (1) He is supremely good; he is the sum of all good. He that loves God loves all that is good, and hates all that is evil. (2) He is not only good, but lovable. His goodness is attractive; it is worthy of love. (3) All we have and are we owe to him; and the only way in which we can make any return is to love him and obey him in love. That is all that is ours to give; to withhold it is unutterably mean.

(4) "The best thing in man is love, and God wants the best." (5) Such love not only honors God, but elevates man. Love is the most ennobling act of the soul; and the nobler and higher the object, and the more intense the love, so much the more is the one who thus loves ennobled, purified, enlarged, exalted in nature. (6) In him are found all that ought to move the highest affections of men.

THE FOUNDATION OF RELIGION, OF CHARACTER, OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, lies in a right heart, a heart that loves God and loves men. No act of goodness without this is true goodness. And men will not long continue to do right toward all without this deeper motive. This love is not national, but individual. Each heart must do the loving, and when all hearts do it the whole nation will have this heart of love.

He that has this love in his heart has the fountain and source of all virtue. It is to the life what the mainspring is to a watch, what



Phylactery.
Worn on the forehead.

7. ^{And} ^{and} ¹ thou shalt ^a teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8. ² And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be ^{as} ^{for} frontlets between thine eyes.

9. ³ And thou shalt write them upon the ^{on} ^{door} posts of thy house, and upon thy gates.

¹ Deut. 4: 9; Psal. 78: 4, 5, 6.

² Ex. 13: 9, 16; Deut. 11: 18.

³ Deut. 11: 20; Isa. 57: 8.

^a Hebrew, *whet*, or *sharpen*.

a fountain is to a stream, what the soul is to the body, what the two olive trees of Zechariah's vision were to the lamps they fed. This is what faith in Christ brings to the soul.

The one great essential, both for the individual and the State, is a new life in the soul that supremely loves the good and hates the evil. This is the one way to the best life here and hereafter. The State is made up of individuals, and, therefore, if every one had this new life the whole State would be free from its corruptions and crimes. The newspapers would give us the morning news of good deeds, instead of its flood of crimes and wrongs.

The way to get the revival of righteousness we so much need is by a revival of true religion, a revival that changes the heart, a revival of love to God and love to man. As Herbert Spencer said, "Golden conduct does not proceed from leaden instincts."

III. Education in Religion and Righteousness.—Vs. 7-9. 7. **And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children.** In every way, by home instruction, and by schools, and by sabbath worship and teaching. **And shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house,** etc. The atmosphere of the home shall be full of these truths. Men will speak often of that which is of the greatest interest. Conversation is a marvelous power for culture and training. The events of the day, the deeds of ourselves and of others, can be made the occasion of moral instruction, in a concrete and vivid form. They are to great moral principles what the particles in the air are to the light, which would be generally invisible but for the objects which reflect and disperse it. The home is in its nature a university. It is a large part of the true "university extension" movement.

FAMILY TRAINING is the greatest influence around the young.

FAMILY RELIGION is the foundation of church, of Sunday school, of religious life, of the country's morality and prosperity.

FAMILY PRAYERS are a great aid to family religion, and the International Lessons for the whole family are one of the greatest helps to this end.

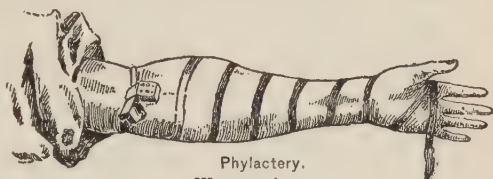
THE FAMILY ATMOSPHERE, of religious life, of benevolence, of temperance, of kindness, of intelligence, of bright conversation, is the largest factor in family training.

8. **Thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand,** etc. It was a literal and formal interpretation of this command which led to the use of phylacteries upon the arm and upon the forehead. These are small cubical leather cases, in which are parchments containing four passages of Scripture in four columns (Ex. 13: 1-10, 11-16; Deut. 6: 4-9 and 11: 13-21). These are bound upon the arm and between the eyes by leather thongs.

The real meaning of this command is that God's law should be in every deed of the hand, in the sight of the eyes, in the plans of the head. Every part of the daily life should be ruled by God's law. It should never be forgotten.

9. **Write them upon the posts of thy house.** This is the origin of the Jewish *Mezuzah*, "the name given to the square piece of parchment, inscribed with Deut. 6: 4-9 and 11: 13-21, which is rolled up in a small cylinder of wood or metal, and affixed to the right-hand post of every door in a Jewish house. The pious Jew touches the *Mezuzah* on each occasion of passing, or kisses his finger, and says in Hebrew Psalm 121: 8, 'The Lord shall preserve thy going out,' etc."—*Cook*. The name of God is always seen on the outside through an opening, or through the glass case.

The real meaning is that the whole house is to be ruled according to God's law; all



Phylactery.
Worn on the arm.

10. And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall ^{have brought} ^{bring} thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to A'brā-hām, to I'saac, and to Jā'cob, to give thee, great and goodly cities, ¹ which thou buildedst not,

11. ^{And} ^{and} houses full of all good ^{things,} ^{things,} which thou filledst not, and ^{wells} ^{cisterns} ^{digged,} ^{hewn out,} which thou ^{diggedst} ^{hewedst} not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; ² when ^{and} thou shalt ^{have eaten} ^{eat} and be full;

12. ^{Then} ^{then} beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of E'gypt, ^{from} ^{out of} the house of ^a bondage.

13. Thou shalt ³ fear the LORD thy God; and ^{serve him,} ^{him shalt thou serve,} and ⁴ shalt swear by his name.

14. Ye shall not ⁵ go after other gods, ⁶ of the gods of the ^{people} ^{peoples} which ^{are} ^{are} round about you;

15. ^{(For} ^{for} ⁷ the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) ^{the LORD thy God in the midst of thee is a jealous God;} ⁸ lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and ^{he} destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

¹ Josh. 24: 13; Psa. 105: 44.

² Deut. 8: 10.

³ Deut. 10: 12; Matt. 4: 10; Luke 4: 8.

⁴ Psa. 63: 11; Isa. 45: 23.

⁵ Deut. 8: 19; Jer. 25: 6.

⁶ Deut. 13: 7.

⁷ Ex. 20: 5; Deut. 4: 24.

⁸ Deut. 7: 4.

^a Hebrew, *bondmen*.

goings out and comings in must be for right purposes. Since writings were rare and costly, few could possess copies of the law, or read them if they did possess them; this command kept the truths of God ever before the eyes of the people.

It is true, as Herbert Spencer says, that education alone, especially secular education, "creeds pasted on the memory, good principles learned by rote, lessons in right and wrong will not eradicate vicious propensities. . . . All history, both of the race and the individual, goes to prove that in a majority of cases precepts do not act at all. . . . But if you make virtue loved and vice loathed, if you arouse a noble desire, if you bring into life a previously dormant sentiment, . . . if, in short, you produce a state of mind to which proper behavior is natural, spontaneous, instinctive, you do some good."

It is this state of mind which is produced most of all by religious education in the family, — family conversation, family living, family religion, family examples, all producing that which is the sum of all, a family atmosphere of love, religion, and righteousness.

ILLUSTRATION. In Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse* is a strange story called "Rappacini's Daughter." The father was a chemist who was investigating poisons, and had a charming garden, an Eden in which every plant and flower was poison and exhaled its poison in its fragrance. His beautiful daughter lived in this poison atmosphere till her own breath was poison, and the bees and insects which came within its influence fell withered and dead at her feet; the bouquet of flowers she took in her hand began to fade and wither. Her lover, who walked with her in the garden among the flowers, found after a time that the poisonous perfumes had filled his own being, and insects died in his breath.

This is an illustration by contrast of the power of the atmosphere of a Christian home, where every flower of conversation and every fruit of life exhales the wondrous perfume of the character of God as revealed in his Word and in the Life of Jesus Christ, and the home is filled with the fragrance as the house in Bethany where Jesus loved to be was filled by the nard in Mary's alabaster flask.

IV. **Lest We Forget.** — Vs. 10-15. 11. When thou shalt have eaten and be full; then comes the danger which ever accompanies prosperity and luxury.

12. **Beware lest thou forget the LORD,** forget all you owe to him, forget to thank him, to worship him, to love and obey him. Worldliness, luxury, and forgetfulness of God have ruined many a nation and many a soul.

13. **Thou shalt fear,** reverence, look up to with awe, feel how great he is, and how he will punish those who rebel against him. **And . . . swear by his name.** Not profanely, but all legal oaths shall be in his name, and not in the name of the heathen gods, for that is a recognition of them as real gods, and is a step in the direction of worshiping them.

14. **Ye shall not go after other gods,** to which they would be tempted by association with their heathen neighbors.

15. **Thy God is a jealous God,** that is, determined to have no rival. **The anger**

of the LORD, his intense feeling against sin which leads him to punish. **Destroy thee from off the face of the earth**, because they would no longer be his people, and kingdom, and proclaim his truth, and carry out his purposes. If they refused to do the work that must be done for the salvation of the world, then they must be set one side, and another people formed who would be God's instrument of redemption.

"Oh, may thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold,
Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,
And win with them the victor's crown of gold.

"O blest Communion, fellowship divine;
We feebly struggle; they in glory shine;
Yet all are one in thee, for all are thine."

What Charles Kingsley says of England is true of our land as well. "Men say 'As long as England is ahead of the world in coal and iron, she may defy the world.' I do not believe it, for if she became a wicked nation, all the coal and iron in the universe would not keep her from being ruined."

"God of our fathers, known of old;
Lord of our far-flung battle line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine,
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

"If drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not thee in awe—
Such boasting as the Gentiles use
Or lesser breeds without the law,
Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
LEST WE FORGET—LEST WE FORGET!"
— *From Kipling's Recessional.*

LESSON XII.—September 22.

THE DEATH OF MOSES.—Deuteronomy 34: 1-12.

READ Deuteronomy 31-34. COMMIT vs. 10-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.*—
PSA. 116: 15.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Study every reference to Moses both in the Old Testament history of his life and work, and later references to him, as in Hos. 12: 13; Jer. 15: 1; Psalm 90 (title); Psa. 106: 23; Matt. 17: 3, 4; Acts 7: 20-

44; Luke 20: 37; Heb. 3: 2, 5; 11: 24-27; Rev. 15: 3.

From these make out his personal history, and a list of his characteristics and of his writings.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Divide up the history of Moses into the three great periods of 40 years each, and assign them to three of your scholars to make a rapid report in the class of the events in his life.

Set another three to studying the characteristics he showed in each of these periods.

Let another study the later Bible references to Moses, and learn what additional light these throw upon his life, and upon his character.

Pictures of Moses may be shown to see how nearly they represent the views of Moses the scholars have formed.

Cause the man Moses to be impressed clearly, vividly, and durably upon the memory of each scholar, both as to history and character.

One or two of the poems referred to under "Literary References" may be read in the class.

LEARN BY HEART.

V. 10; Heb. 11: 13, 16.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—Moses died in the first week of the 12th month (February—March) of the 40th year since the exodus. B. C. 1491 (according to the common chronology).

Place.—Moses died on Mt. Nebo, the culminating peak of the Pisgah range of the mountains of Moab. It is 9½ miles east of the northern end of the Dead Sea.

The Israelites were encamped on the plateau near its base, opposite Jericho.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Commentaries on Deuteronomy. Chapters on the death of Moses in all the *Lives* hitherto cited, especially Stalker's *Biblical Character Sketches* and Oosterzee's *Moses*. G. A. Smith's *Historical Geography* is fine not only in relation to Mt. Nebo, but for its characterization of the songs of Moses.

Thomson's *The Land and the Book*. *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, art. "Moses."

Stanley's *History of the Jewish Church*, Vol. I., pp. 168-175. Chapters in Kingsley's *Gospel of the Pentateuch* (Macmillan).

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Mrs. Frances Cecil Alexander's "Burial of Moses"; "Moses Seeing the Land," by John Henry Newman; "The Death of Moses," by George Eliot; "Mount Nebo," by Freiligrath; "No Man Knoweth His Sepulchre," by Bryant; "The Death of Moses," by Montgomery.

These and others are found in *The Poet's Bible*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, "Beulah Land" and the "Delectable Mountains." *Hymn*, "Immanuel's Land."

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Closing Days and Character of Moses.

I. HIS VISION FROM THE MOUNT (vs. 1-4).

From Mt. Nebo.
Visions of the heavenly land.

II. THE DEATH OF MOSES (vs. 5-9).

III. A CHARACTER SKETCH OF MOSES.

Prophet, Saint.
Statesman, General, Lawgiver.
Poet, Orator.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"On Jordan's rugged banks I stand."
"There is a land of pure delight."

HOME WORK
AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The vision from Pisgah.
Compare with Bunyan's "Delectable Mountains."
The death of Moses.
What were the chief elements of his character?
What great functions or departments of life did he fulfil, as "statesman," etc.?
Do you know any greater man in history? If any, who?
Was he a perfect man?

1. And Mō'ses went up from the plains of Mō'ab ¹ unto ^{the mountain of} Nē'bo, to the top of a Pīs'gah, that ^{is} over against Jēr'i-chō. And the LORD ² shewed him all the land of Gīl'e-ād, ³ unto Dān;

¹ Num. 27: 12; 33: 47; Deut. 32: 49.

² Deut. 3: 27.

³ Gen. 14: 14.
^a Or, the hill.

I. The Vision from the Mount. — Vs. 1-4. Moses had completed his work. The time had come for him to entrust the future of his people to other hands. On account of his almost only failure to come up to his high standard, at the waters of Meribah, he was not permitted to enter the promised land. His public sin before all the people must be punished to show that God was impartial, that no matter what one's privileges or attainments he cannot be immune in sin. But for Moses, as always with his people, God mingled love with justice, and showed Moses that the punishment was a necessity, but God's heart overflowed with loving-kindness and tender mercies toward his child and prophet.

1. And Moses went up from the plains of Moab, where the Israelites were encamped at their western foot, towards the Jordan, opposite Jericho. **Unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top** (or summit) **of Pisgah.** The general name of the range was Abarim (Deut. 32: 49), which seen from Palestine presents the appearance of a cliff or wall. Pisgah was a part of the Abarim range, and Nebo was its highest peak. **And the LORD shewed him,** caused him to see. Most of the places mentioned can be seen by the natural eye on a clear day in the marvelous transparency of the Oriental air. But the *utmost sea*, the Mediterranean, is hidden by the high central mountains of Palestine and cannot be seen, nor can the portions of the country lying on their western slope toward the sea. In either or both of two ways were these regions seen. (1) Every one of these divisions was actually visible. For instance, Judah, whose borders were to extend to the sea, was seen. Not every little part of it, but as a whole. I see the whole mountain range from my summer home, but in saying so I am not untrue, even though the slopes on the farther side are hidden from me. (2) There may have been some miraculous extension of his vision as by a mirage. I think the first way is the more probable. **Gilead,** the mountainous region east of the Jordan from the northern end of the Dead Sea, where Moses saw

2. ^{And} all Nāph'ta-li, and the land of E'phrā'im' and Ma-nās'seh, and all the land of Jū'dah, ¹ unto the ^{utmost} ^{hinder} sea;

3. ^{And the south,} and the ^{Plain} of the valley of Jēr'ī-chō' ² the city of palm trees, unto Zō'ar.

4. And the LORD said unto him, ³ This ^{is} the land which I swear unto A'brā-hām, unto I'saac, and unto Jā'cob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: ⁴ I have caused thee to see ^{it} with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.

¹ Deut. 11: 24.

² Judg. 1: 16; 2 Chron. 28: 15.

³ Gen. 12: 7.

⁴ Deut. 3: 27.

to the southern end of the Sea of Galilee. It was a rich and fertile region. **Unto Dan.** "The Dan meant can be only the well-known place of that name near the foot of Hermon, often mentioned as the extreme north of Canaan."—*Professor Driver*. Mt. Hermon was seen from Pisgah by Canon Tristram.

2. **And all Naphtali.** The country north and northwest of the Sea of Galilee, afterwards occupied by the tribe of Naphtali. Its hills, in dim outline, bounded the view to the north. **And the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh.** An extensive region, the center of Palestine, stretching from Jordan to Mediterranean. **And all the land of Judah,** which as divided among the tribe extended **unto the utmost** (or "hinder" R. v.) **sea.**

3. **And the south.** R. v., South, the general name of the southern part of Palestine. **And the plain.** R. v., Plain. Driver calls it the Round, the Oval plain into which the valley of the Jordan expands at the head of the Dead Sea, in which **Jericho** is situated. **The city of palm trees.** Jericho, though its site is now barren, was a lovely spot in ancient times, and especially noted for its palm groves. **Unto Zoar.** It is unknown whether this city was at the northern or southern end of the Dead Sea.

4. **This is the land, etc.** See Gen. 12: 7; 13: 5. **Thou shalt not go over.** The reason is given in Deut. 32: 51: "Because ye trespassed at the waters of Meribah; because ye sanctified me not." See the story in Num. 20: 1-13.

THE VISION MOSES SAW showed to him that his life had been a success, that he had accomplished his work, and the ends he had sought were certain to be accomplished. He had heard the vision of Balaam, and he, too, may have been able to say,

"I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not nigh;

There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob,
And a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel,"

The vision comforted him in view of death, as he saw in the glorious view spread out before him a symbol of the better Promised Land to which he was going.

"Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o'er,
Not Jordan's stream, nor Death's dark flood,
Should fright us from the shore."

VISIONS OF HEAVEN. God gives us Pisgah views of the Promised Land to which we are traveling through this wilderness world. (1) We have them in the Scriptures, where glimpses of heaven are given to us, both by description and by the ideals of a holy life set before us. But one must have something of the character of Moses before he can see the vision in its true glory. (2) God gives his children heavenly experiences, earnestness and foretastes of the blessedness to come. But these, too, come after faithful service and devoted living.

THE OBJECT of these visions is (1) to present before us the true ideal of life. It is not a vain thing to think often of a perfect and holy heaven, for it shows us how we ought to live on earth. (2) To be a motive and inspiration to higher living. (3) To be a comfort in hours of darkness and discouragement.

"Still, through our paltry stir and strife,
Glow down the wished Ideal,
And Longing moulds in clay what Life
Carves in the marble Real."—*Lowell*.

5. ¹ So Mō'ses the servant of the LORD died there in the land of Mō'ab, according to the word of the LORD.

6. And he buried him in ^athe valley in the land of Mō'ab over against Bēth-pe'or: but ²no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.

7. ³ And Mō'ses ^{was} an hundred and twenty years old when he died: ⁴his eye was not dim, nor his ^anatural force ^babated.

8. And the children of Is'ra-el wept for Mō'ses in the plains of Mō'ab ⁵thirty days: so the days of weeping ^{and} in the mourning for Mō'ses were ended.

¹ Deut. 32 : 50 ; Josh. 1 : 1, 2.

⁴ Gen. 27 : 1 ; Josh. 14 : 10.

^a Hebrew, *moisture*.

² Jude 9.

⁵ Gen. 50 : 3 ; Num. 20 : 29.

^b Hebrew, *fled*.

³ Deut. 31 : 2.

II. The Death of Moses. — Vs. 5-9. 5. So Moses the servant of the LORD. Of all the titles of Moses this is the noblest, and gives the highest grace and blessing to all the others. Yet it is one that each of us may have upon our monument if we will.

"And when these earthly years are past and gone,
Temptation's battle fought, the victory won,
From heaven shall gently come this message down,
They that have borne the cross, shall wear a crown
Never to fade."

Died there . . . according to the word of the LORD. "Or, as the word literally is, *by the mouth of the Lord*; and we do not wonder that the Jewish rabbis understand it to mean *by the kiss of the Lord*. As the father kisses his boy when he lifts him to his knee, so death came to Moses as a token of his Lord's affection." — *Wm. M. Taylor*. "Then God bent over the face of Moses and kissed him. And the soul leaped up in joy, and went with the kiss of God to paradise." — *Weil's Legends*.

6. And he buried him. And, as old Thomas Fuller quaintly says, "Buried also his grave." Over against Beth-peor. Beth-peor was a Moabite town, on a hill sacred to the god Peor, overlooking the Wady Heshbān where the Israelites were encamped (Deut. 3: 29). Between the plateau and the valley "there are some thousand feet of slopes and gullies, where no foot comes, the rock is crumbling, and utter silence reigns, save for the west wind moaning through the thistles. Here Moses was laid. Who would wish to know the exact spot? The whole region is a sepulchre." — *George Adam Smith*. But no man knoweth of his sepulchre. Why was the grave hidden? (1) Because it might have become the object of superstitious idolatry. It is well, for this reason, that the grave of Christ is unknown. (2) Moses, some think, was speedily taken to heaven in the same way as Enoch and Elijah (see Jude 9 and Matt. 17: 1-8) and his body directly changed into the spiritual resurrection body of the saints (1 Cor. 15: 41-52). (3) That he might belong not to a place or a tribe, but to all the world.

ILLUSTRATION. John and Charles Wesley are buried in Westminster Abbey, and on their monument is this inscription: "God buries the worker, but carries on the work."

ILLUSTRATION. "We, also, careless of a monument by the grave, should build it in the world — a monument by which men may be taught to remember, not where we died, but where we lived." — *Ruskin*.

"This was the truest warrior
That ever buckled sword;
This the most gifted poet
That ever breathed a word.
And never earth's philosopher
Traced with his golden pen
On the deathless page, truths half so sage
As he wrote down for men.

"And had he not high honor?
The hillside for his pall,
To lie in state, while angels wait
With stars for tapers tall;
And the dark rock pines, like tossing plumes,
Over his bier to wave;
And God's own hand, in that lonely land,
To lay him in the grave."

— *Cecil Frances Alexander*.

7. Nor his natural force abated. *Driver*: "Neither had his freshness fled." *Beecher*: "And his vigor had not fled." It does not say there was no abatement in any degree.

8. Thirty days for men of high rank (Gen. 50: 3-10; Num. 20: 29), while seven was the usual number.

9. And Jōsh'u-a the son of Nūn was full of the ¹spirit of wisdom; for ²Mō'ses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Is'ra-el hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Mō'ses.

10. And there ³arose not ^{hath not arisen} a prophet since in Is'ra-el like unto Mō'ses, ⁴whom the LORD knew face to face;

11. ^{In in} all ⁵the signs and the wonders, which the LORD sent him to do in the land of E'gypt, to Phā'raōh, and to all his servants, and to all his land;

12. ^{And and} in all ^{that the} mighty hand, and in all the great terror, which Mō'ses ^{shewed wrought} in the sight of all Is'ra-el.

¹ Isa. 11: 2.

² Num. 27: 18, 23.

³ Deut. 18: 15.

⁴ Ex. 33: 11; Num. 12: 6, 8;

Deut. 5: 4*

⁵ Deut. 4: 34

9. And Joshua. Moses' successor will be considered in Lesson I. of the next Quarter.

III. Character Sketch of Moses. — Vs. 10-12. Moses stands among the few greatest men in all history. In every direction he was great and good.

1. AS A PROPHET. A prophet is one who speaks and acts under the direction of God, the medium through which God reveals his will to men.

10. And there arose not a prophet . . . like unto Moses. No other was like him till we come to Jesus, the prophet whom God had promised should be raised up like unto Moses (Deut. 18: 18), the organizer of a new kingdom, speaking the truth directly from God. **Whom the LORD knew face to face.** God revealed himself and his will directly to Moses without the intervention of any angel or human being. God's spirit acted upon the spirit of Moses.

11. In all the signs and the wonders, greater than any wrought till Jesus Christ came. They proved to the Israelites that Moses was God's messenger to them, his commands were God's commands, his leading where God would have them led.

12. In all that mighty hand. The hand is the symbol of power in action — the instrument of power. **All the great terror**, which God wrought against Pharaoh and other enemies, which was doubtless one of the reasons why the Israelites were so safe in the wilderness.

2. AS A SAINT. Moses' goodness shines as brightly as his greatness. He was unselfish. He devoted himself at every cost to the good of his people. He encountered every danger for their sakes. He was willing to die to save them. He was the embodiment of love to God and love to man. By seeing God face to face he was becoming transformed into his spiritual likeness.

"O Master, it is good to be
Entranced, enwrapt, alone with thee;

Till we, too, change from grace to grace,
Gazing on that transfigured face."

COMPARE the poem on the Persian fable of the clay made aromatic by dwelling with the rose. — *Peloubet's Suggestive Illustrations on Acts*, p. 104 (*Holman*).

3. HIS IMPERFECTION. Two or three times some fault is attributed to Moses, as every saint has failed in some point at some time. There is no garden but has some weeds. But the most unjust thing we can do is to measure its value by its weeds and not by its fruits. "By their *fruits* ye shall know them." Moses' few faults are such that they would never be noticed at all in a worldly man. They are like a broken limb on a tree loaded with magnificent fruit. All God's works through men are done by imperfect instruments.

"There's a fleck of rust on the flawless blade—
On the armor of price there's one:
There's a mole on the cheek of the lovely maid—
There are spots upon the sun.

But the blade of Damascus has succored the weak,
The shield saved a knight from a fall;
The mole is a grace on my lady's cheek—
The sun, it shines for all." — *S. A. Walker*.

4. MOSES AS A STATESMAN. "Inspiration apart, Moses possessed all those endowments and qualities which form the consummate statesman and chief magistrate: an intellect of the highest order; a perfect mastery of all the civil wisdom of the age; a penetrating, comprehensive, and sagacious judgment; great promptness and energy in action; patriotism which neither ingratitude, ill treatment nor rebellion could quench, or even cool;

a commanding and persuasive eloquence; a hearty love of truth; an incorruptible virtue; an entire freedom from selfish ambition; an invincible hatred of tyranny and injustice; a patient endurance of toil; a courageous contempt of danger; and a greatness of soul in which he has never been surpassed by the most admired heroes of ancient or modern times. Comprehensiveness, grasp, force, sagacity were the predominant characteristics of his mind; magnanimity, disinterestedness, an enthusiastic devotion to liberty, and an ardent but rational piety, the leading qualities of his heart." — *Wines in Commentaries on the Laws of the Ancient Hebrews*, p. 126.

5. AS A GENERAL. Moses delivered his people from the most powerful nation on earth; maintained them amid the perils of the desert for forty years, and led them in confidence against a country settled by fierce tribes, which they conquered.

6. AS A LAWGIVER. However much may have been added by the development of the people, like the amendments to the Constitution and laws of the United States, yet through Moses was instituted the great system of civil and religious law.

7. AS A POET. The two songs in Deuteronomy 32 and 33, and Psalm 90.

8. AS AN ORATOR. The great orations in Deuteronomy stand among the few greatest masterpieces of eloquence in the world's history, if not at their head.

LESSON XIII. — September 29.

REVIEW.

READ Psalm 90.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plentiful in mercy.* — PSA. 103: 8.

THE EXTENT OF THE HISTORY. Four books of the Bible. The portions of the land where these four narratives are located can be seen by the accompanying outline map.

EXTENT OF TIME. Nearly forty years from the spring of 1491 to the spring of 1451, according to the common chronology in our Bible margins. Many scholars think that the date is two or more centuries later.

EXTENT OF TERRITORY. The Sinaitic peninsula, between the two arms of the Red Sea; from Egypt on the west to the Moabite mountains east of the Dead Sea; from the point of the peninsula on the south to the southern boundaries of Palestine on the north; together with the Gilead country east of the Jordan.

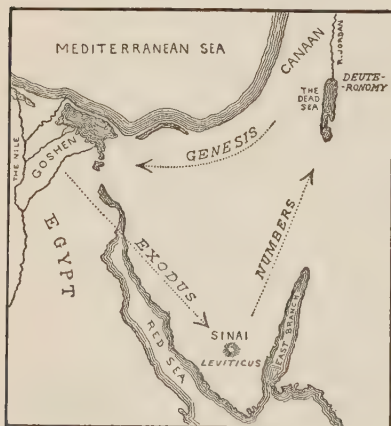
THE TRAVEL CLUB should trace on the map the movements of the Israelites from Egypt to the encampment by the Jordan opposite Jericho; noting the names of the places and the events which took place in them.

Perhaps in no way can this Review be made more interesting and more effective than by treating the period as

AN ANCIENT PILGRIM'S PROGRESS,

and placing the events we have studied beside the famous allegory of Bunyan, Egypt being the City of Destruction, and the encampment in Beulah Land on the borders of the river beyond which was the Celestial City, the Land of Promise. Cause your scholars to remember ever that the Celestial City does not mean merely a place at the end of life, but the heavenly character, heavenly life, and heavenly blessedness here and everywhere.

1. Escaping from Egypt, with religious rites, at the call of Moses, in view of the judgments of God, and feeling bitterly the



degradation of slavery, is like Christian hasting from the City of Destruction with his fingers in his ears, crying, "Life, Life, Eternal Life!"

2. Crossing the Red Sea against opposition, finding the way with difficulty, but helped by God's almighty power, is like beginning the Christian life.

3. The bitter Waters of Marah, the trials of the desert, early in their march to the land of promise, remind us of the Slough of Despond, in which Pliable exclaimed, "Is this the happiness ye have told me all this while of?"

4. The Wells and Palm Trees of Elim show us the spring at the base of the Hill Difficulty, and the pleasant arbor about midway to the top of the hill "made by the Lord of the hill for the refreshing of weary travelers."

5. The Pillar of Cloud and of Fire is represented by Evangelist and the Roll and the Shining Ones.

6. The Enemies, as Amalek and the Canaanites and the sons of Anak, are pictured by Apollyon with his fiery darts in the Valley of Humiliation.

7. The Manna has its counterpart in the Interpreter and the Roll, the teachings of Evangelist, and the supper in the Palace Beautiful, with its "feast of reason and flow of soul."

8. The Golden Calf and its worship is partly paralleled by Worldly Wiseman and others, who sought to turn the pilgrims to other sources of relief than the Cross of Christ and the Wicket Gate.

9. The frequent murmurings and complaints, the bitter doubts whether they ever would reach "the land flowing with milk and honey," remind us of Christian and Hopeful in the Castle of Giant Despair.

But as they found the Key of Promise and of hope, so all the things that tried the Israelites were a part of their necessary discipline. They should have made a heavenly ladder of their trials. "Jacob, wrestling all night with the strange power that maims him, clings and wrestles on, and will not let go wrestling until he has extorted a blessing from his hurter." "The hard lot, called poverty, ignorance, narrow conditions, accidents, is waiting to give us, after the struggle, temperance, diligence, fortitude, concentration."

10. The Tabernacle, with all its appointments, is symbolized by the Palace Beautiful, with its armor and supper and chamber of peace.

11. The truths taught by the Day of Atonement and the Brazen Serpent are well expressed by the burden on Christian's back falling off in the presence of the Cross, so that he "gave three leaps of joy, and went on singing."

12. The report of the spies reminds us of the Delectable Mountains, whence the pilgrims caught glimpses of the Celestial City.

13. The Israelites' anger at Caleb and Joshua makes us think of the trial of Faithful in Vanity Fair.

14. Moses on Mt. Nebo looking over Jordan and obtaining glimpses of the promised land reminds us of Christian and Hopeful in the land of Beulah, listening to the singing of birds of paradise, and seeing the Shining Ones, and gaining glimpses of the gem-built walls of the city, just over the narrow river of Death.

"There is a beautiful legend that at the funeral of Saint Ranieri, June, 1161, at the moment when, as is usual in the course of the service for the dead, the '*Gloria in excelsis*' was suppressed, as unbefitting in its cheerful character the sadness of the occasion, a choir of angels appeared in the midst of the silent congregation and chanted the words so mistakenly omitted, a spontaneous accompaniment bursting forth from the organ." — *London Sunday-School Chronicle*.

FOURTH QUARTER,

OCT. 6 TO DEC. 29, 1907.

JOSHUA AND THE JUDGES.

The Conquest and the Theocracy.

LESSON I. — October 6.

JOSHUA, ISRAEL'S NEW LEADER. — Joshua 1: 1-11.

READ Num. 27: 12-23; Joshua 1. COMMIT v. 7.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *I will not fail thee nor forsake thee.* — JOSH. 1: 5.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

1. Take a Concordance or Bible Text-book and look up every passage where Joshua is mentioned. Write down each event of his life in one column. In another, the characteristics of the man which these

events reveal. In a third column write persons with whom through these events he came in contact, and his influence over them, or their influence over him.

2. Others can make a study of the book of Joshua as a whole.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

In this lesson the history is also an allegory of life. The two pictures should be placed side by side.

First. Bring out in clear outlines the situation in which the Israelites were placed, the leader, the life to be lived, the difficulties in the way, the qualities necessary for achieving success, the conditions and preparations. Draw the facts from the scholars, so that they shall have as vivid a picture as if they were actually seeing what was going on.

Second. Then cause them to see another picture of the possible life that is before them. Draw from them the points in the first picture which illustrate the second.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The *International Critical Commentary* is not yet out, but may be before these lessons are to be studied. *The Cambridge Bible*, Maclear. *The Expositor's Bible*, Blaikie. *The Polychrome Bible on Joshua* (Dodd and Mead) shows by colors the composite structure of the book as divided

among different authors by many scholars. *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, art. "Joshua," by Geo. A. Smith. *Stanley's Jewish Church*, 1: 201-203. *Geikie's Hours with the Bible*, 2: 429-434. *Meyer's Joshua and the Land of Promise*. *Whyte's Bible Characters*. *Thornley Smith's Joshua and His Times*. *Wilbert W. White's Studies in Old Testament Characters*.

LITERARY REFERENCES.

"We dwell this side of Jordan's stream."

— *Anon.*

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 3, 7-9.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — The last of March or early in April (Josh. 4: 19 compared with Josh. 1: 11), B. C. 1451 according to our Bible margins. Many scholars place it two centuries earlier. See next lesson.

It was directly after our last lesson, forty years after the Exodus.

Place. — The plain of the Jordan on the east side, at the foot of the Moabite mountains, opposite Jericho.



GENERAL VIEW OF BETHLEHEM.
(The Home of Ruth and Naomi.)

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The book of Joshua.
Joshua, — his life.
Joshua, — a character sketch.
A picture of the situation.
How far an allegory or illustration of life.
Courage, how sustained.
Conditions of success.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Onward, Christian soldiers."
"The Son of God goes forth to war; who follows in his train?"

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DE- CIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Am I taking the means for reaching a successful life — studying the Scriptures, taking courage, obeying God?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: How to Find and to
Live the Life Worth Living.

I. JOSHUA, THE NEW LEADER.

Name. Ancestry. Birth.
History to date. Characteristics.

II. THE PROMISE OF A NEW LIFE AND A NEW HOME (vs. 1-4).

The extent. How limited.
The principle.

III. THE DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY.

Their greatness.

IV. HOW GOD INSPIRED THE PEOPLE WITH THE QUALITIES NECESSARY TO OVERCOME THEM (vs. 5, 6, 9).

Comforting. Faith. Courage. Assurance.

V. THE ESSENTIAL CONDITION OF suc- CESS (vs. 7, 8).

Studying, teaching, obeying the Law of God.

OUTLINE STUDY OF THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

The "Good Courage" Chapter	The Rahab Chapter. See Heb. 11: 31	The Jordan Chapter	The Twelve Stones Chapter	The Prince of the Lord Chapter	The Jericho Chapter	The Achan Chapter	The A1 Chapter	The Gibeonite Chapter	The King of Jerusalem Chapter [Southern Campaign]	[Northern Campaign] The King of Hazor Chapter	The Thirty-one Kings Chapter	The East Side Inheritance	The Caleb Inheritance	The Judah Inheritance	The Ephraim Inheritance	The Manasseh Inheritance	The Benjamin Inheritance	The Simeon — Asher — Inheritance	The Cities of Refuge	The Levites' Inheritance	The Altar Chapter	"One Has Chased a Thousand"	"As for Me and My House"
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24

A. Israel under God, led by Joshua, enters, subdues, and distributes the Land of Canaan

B. Key Word: — **INHERITANCE** Read Hebrews, Chapter 4.

C. THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN

THE DIVISION OF CANAAN

D. Preparation for the Campaign	Central Campaign	Southern Campaign	Northern Campaign	The East and Caleb's	The West
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— From W. W. White's Bible Characters, by permission.

I. Joshua, the New Leader. — HIS NAME, originally Hoshea, the same as the prophet Hosea, signifying "salvation" or "help." To this was added afterwards (Num. 13: 16) "Je" for Jehovah, and the name became Jehoshua, "Jehovah is salvation," shortened to Joshua, later modified in Neh. 8: 17 to Jeshua, from which came its Greek form in the Septuagint, *Jesous*, JESUS, of whom Joshua was in some respects a type.

HIS ANCESTRY. He was an Ephraimite, a descendant of Joseph, through Ephraim, and according to 1 Chron. 7: 22-27 he was the eleventh generation from Joseph. His father's name was Nun, and his grandfather, Elishama, was a captain of the army of the Ephraimites, 40,500 in number, at the organization of the Israelites soon after the Exodus (Num. 2: 18, etc., compared with 1 Chron. 7: 27).

HIS BIRTHPLACE. He must have been born in Goshen in Egypt, where his parents were in slavery.

DATE OF BIRTH. He died at the age of 110 (Judg. 2: 8). And if he was twenty-seven years in Canaan, as the Jews say, he would be 83 at the time of the crossing in B. C. 1451, and therefore 43 at the time of the Exodus, or thirty-seven years younger than Moses. His birth, according to Ussher's chronology, would therefore be about B. C. 1534; or 1334, according to the later chronology.

HIS HISTORY UP TO THIS TIME. Brought up in Egypt, under their bondage, he must have known and had part in the great deliverance, — the plagues, the first Passover, the crossing of the Red Sea, the desert march, the giving of the law from Sinai. His first appearance in the Scripture narrative is as a commander of the Israelite forces in a battle with the Amalekites soon after the Exodus (Ex. 17: 8-16), before the arrival of the Israelites at Sinai. He then became an attendant or aide-de-camp to Moses. He was one of the explorers sent out to spy out the land, and, with Caleb, stood up with great courage and faith against public opinion, which was ready to stone them to death. He was appointed Moses' successor (Num. 27: 18-23; Deut. 34: 9). His greatest work followed, for which all the previous years were a preparation.

HIS AGE. At 83 Joshua began his greatest work. It is true that while some have done their best work in early life, others have done their best late in life. The statement in Psalm 90 that the best of life ends at 70 years is not the statement of a law, nor for all time, but only of an average fact at that time. Moses and Joshua are not alone in their best work after that age. Franklin labored till he was 84. Gladstone made great speeches after he was 80. Von Moltke directed great armies after 80. Tennyson, Holmes, Whittier, Humboldt, Carlyle, and many others did grand work when as old as Joshua.

CHARACTERISTICS. It has been said that every life, however commonplace, is a drama, a poem; and we would so see it if we fully comprehended it. What Tennyson says of a flower is equally true of each human life, —

" Flower on the crannied wall
 . . . if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is."

We would know nearly all of life if we completely understood any one life. It is well to read what we can in Joshua's Book of Life.

1. Matheson calls his life prosaic, commonplace, that of an assistant to Moses. Of the three classes of men — those "in *advance* of their time, the men *up* to their time, and the men *following* their time" — Joshua was one of the last type, "without originality, obeying orders; his deeds only breathe *through* him, not come *from* him." Thus the blind preacher makes Joshua a comfort and strength and hope to the vast majority of men.

This may be true of the earlier portions of his life up to the time of this lesson. But now he comes to the reward of his faithfulness as one who obeys orders. By obeying he has learned to command. By faithfulness in little things he is able to do great things. This is the only ladder that may be climbed to the best. The one who would be an orator is told to learn the great orations by heart. The one who would be a painter studies and copies the great artists. When the time came he was able to enter the door to his great life-work.

2. A well-known scholar, says the *Temple Bible*, "considers the finest religious conception in the book the appearance to Joshua of the angelic 'Captain of the Lord's host' (Josh. 5: 13-15). It is a noble illustration of the truth that in the great causes of God upon the earth, the leaders, however supreme they seem, are themselves led." Joshua was great because he was under divine guidance, taught by divine wisdom, and, therefore, humble and strong.

3. He was a man of great courage, both physical and moral, as he had shown in the battle with Amalek, and still more in action, in spying out the land and in almost alone resisting the clamors of the people.

4. He was a man of faith.

5. He was deeply and intensely religious, through and through.

6. He came to have fine qualities as a general, — keen observation, power to control, wise leadership, celerity of movement, skilful strategy, boldness of attack.

Ebers, in his romance *Joshua*, makes him, not without some probability, a captain, prior to the Exodus, in the Egyptian army, well accustomed to campaigning.

ILLUSTRATION. Mr. Glaisher, of Greenwich Observatory, said, "Many young men depend too much upon natural abilities for success, and many have too little confidence in their own powers. All should know that the power of a man's mind is not solely dependent

1. Now ^{it came to pass} after the death of Mō'ses the servant of the LORD ^{it came to pass,} that the LORD spake unto Jōsh'u-a the son of Nūn, Mō'ses' ¹minister, saying,

2. ²Mō'ses my servant is dead; now therefore arise, go over this Jor'dan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, ^{even} to the children of Is'ra-el.

3. ³Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, ^{that} have I given ^{unto you,} as I ^{said} spake unto Mō'ses.

¹ Ex. 24: 13; Deut. 1: 38.

² Deut. 34: 5.

³ Deut. 11: 24; Josh. 14: 9.

upon his *ability*, but that his real momentum is the *product of his talents multiplied into his industry.*"

"All good things await
Him who cares not to be great,
But as he saves and serves the state."

"Character is the only thing that counts. Though you had the front of Jove himself, an eye like Mars, and had not character, some homely, puny-looking dwarf, who has what you lack, may rise up at any moment and upset you."

ILLUSTRATION. "How did Robert Louis Stevenson become such a master of English prose? By writing some of his pieces nine times over. Look at a page of Tennyson's manuscript. You will find fifty corrections on a single sheet. It is not by floating with the current that any one attains what is worthy and lasting, but by 'separating himself from the crowd, by scorning delights, and living laborious days.' Depend upon it, in religion, as elsewhere, the primrose path of dalliance, the broad way, the life that knows no strain, no restraint, no pressure, no fatigue, no watchful self-denial, is a doomed life."

II. **The Promise of the New Life and the New Home.**—Vs. 1-4. 1. **Moses the servant of the Lord.** The most noble title. Joshua . . . **Moses' minister**, not the same Hebrew word as "servant" above. Joshua was the intimate attendant, the private secretary, the prime minister, a much nearer relation to Moses than Moses could be to the Lord.

2. **Moses my servant**, the one appointed to do my work, is dead. Therefore there is a vacancy. A new leader is needed. Like Tennyson's brook,

"Men may come and men may go,
But I go on forever."

ILLUSTRATION. In Westminster Abbey is a marble tablet containing the medallion portraits of the two Wesleys combined together, and underneath is the inscription:—

"God buries the worker, but carries on the work."

Arise, take the place of the dead leader. **Go over this Jordan**, which lay below them at flood-tide, between the Israelites and the Promised Land. See next lesson. This command was a severe test of his faith and courage. **The land which I do give to them**, "*which I am giving to them*," as he had long ago promised. The possession of the land is constantly spoken of as God's gift, for without his leadership and protection the Israelites could never have taken possession of it.

3. **Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon.** "That is, every place within the limits specified in the ensuing verse. The expression also intimates the condition upon



From a Photograph by Wilson.
Fountain of Elisha.

It is generally believed the Jericho of Joshua was situated near the Fountain of Elisha.

4. ¹ From the wilderness, and this Lëb'a-non, even unto the great river, the river Eü-phrā'tës, all the land of the Hî'tites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your ^{coast.} ^{border.}

¹ Gen. 15: 18; Ex. 23: 31.

which the land was to be given to the Israelites: their feet must tread it as conquerors." — *Keil*. "As the old Chinese proverb puts it, 'What will you have? says God. Pay for it, and take it.'" — *E. S. Atwood*. **As I said unto Moses** (Deut. 11: 24).

4. **From the wilderness.** The desert of Arabia, where the Israelites wandered so long. This was the *southern* boundary. **And this Lebanon.** Called "this" because visible from the region where the Israelites were encamped. Lebanon signifies *white mountain*, from its snow-clad summits. This was the *northern* boundary. **Unto the great river, the river Euphrates.** The upper part of this river, which belonged to the Hittites, together with the desert south of it, was the *eastern* boundary. **Unto the great sea.** The Mediterranean, the *western* boundary. **The land of the Hittites.** The country north of Damascus, between Lebanon and the Euphrates. Monumental remains of the Hittites have been discovered lately in this region. **Your coast.** Your border. The above statements give the limits of the Promised Land. They were practically the boundaries of the kingdom under David and Solomon, and might have been such all the time if they had fulfilled the conditions and taken possession.

THE PRINCIPLE described here has a very large application. It is true of God's promises, of the kingdom of heaven, of our opportunities, of prosperity, the enjoyments of civilization, usefulness, goodness, the higher joys of the spirit. We can enjoy only so much of this good land as we conquer and take possession of.

ILLUSTRATIONS. A man gives his son an education, but the son receives only so much as he acquires by study. We possess only so much of a book or a library as we make our own by reading and thought. A person may own thousands of books, and acquire possession of none of them.

ILLUSTRATION. Every invention and discovery of our latest civilization — the power of electricity and steam, of printing, of chemistry, of light — were given to man from the beginning. They all lay sleeping in earth and air and sky from the Garden of Eden down the ages, a part of the promised land of the race, waiting for man to discover and use. But they have received only so much as they have actually taken possession of.

III. **The Difficulties in the Way.** — These were very great indeed.

1. The Jordan was at its flood (Josh. 3: 15), absolutely impassable for an army, much less for the whole people of Israel. This made them safe from attack, but also prevented them from taking possession.

2. The people of the land dwelt in walled cities against which the Israelites had no sufficient weapons.

These obstacles rose like an impassable barrier of mountains before the people. "Impossible to overcome" was written all over them. It was like the task which Jesus set before his disciples when he was about to be crucified, — twelve unlearned, unarmed, poor men to conquer the Roman Empire, when one breath of Cesar could sweep them from the earth; to overcome the wealth, the worldliness, the selfishness, the sin, and crime of the world. Lebanon was but a molehill to this mountain of difficulty. The people were dismayed, disheartened, hopeless almost to despair.

"And what am I?
An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry."

IV. **How God Inspired the People with the Qualities Necessary to Overcome Them.** — Vs. 5, 6, 9.

THERE ARE TWO WAYS of enabling people to overcome obstacles. One is to diminish the obstacle, the other is to give larger strength to those who are to overcome. The child who has a burden too great for him to carry can be relieved by taking away part of the burden, or by giving him new strength to carry it. This last way is infinitely better than the other, for it abides with him for all future burdens. It is a part of his nature.

It was in this second way that God helped his people in their present needs, and thus did the best thing for them for all time to come.

5. ¹ There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: ² as I was with Mō'ses, ^{so} ³ I will be with thee: ⁴ I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

6. ⁵ Be strong and of a good courage: for ^{unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them.} ^{thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land}

¹ Deut. 7: 24.² Ex. 3: 12.³ Ex. 3: 9, 17; Deut. 31: 8;

Josh. 3: 7.

⁴ Deut. 31: 6, 8.⁵ Deut. 31: 7.

COMFORTING. "The greatest tragic poet of Greece has left a description of the battle of Salamis. The Persian ships, many and strong, in double crescent lines, blockaded Piræus Harbor. The Athenian vessels, few in number, were crowded within it. When the sun had set, the night before the battle, the commanders of both fleets went from ship to ship rousing the courage of the soldiers by brave words. Doing that, Æschylus called 'comforting' the soldiers." — *W. Burnet Wright*.

"Comforting" means *making strong together*. Nothing is worthy of the name of comfort that is not invigorating, inspiring, filling the soul full of courage and strength.

FIRST THE LEADER, THEN THE PEOPLE. God first "comforted" Joshua, and through him the people. I once heard in a temperance meeting of a man who wondered why God did not send his lightnings to smite every liquor saloon in the land. To which another replied that God had lightnings enough; what he needed was human conductors. So it was in those early times, and so it is now. God inspired the leaders with faith and courage, and they conducted it to the people.

So Paul tells us of "the God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

THE TWO THINGS NECESSARY WERE FAITH AND COURAGE. 5. **There shall not any man be able to stand before thee.** The promise God had before given to the people under Moses (Deut. 11: 25). Jehovah himself stood behind this promise with all his goodness and wisdom and power; just as behind the Lord's Prayer stands "For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever."

THE ASSURANCE OF FAITH. **As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.** Joshua had the experience of Moses' whole lifetime as an encouragement to his faith. Moses had many a trying time, many a hard duty, many a danger and difficulty; and the God who had brought him safely and successfully through would not fail . . . nor forsake the new leader. In every new difficulty before Joshua — and they were many and great — he could look back upon a greater one from which God had delivered Moses. But all his strength, as is all ours, was in God. The work was impossible to him without God's presence. With God he could do all things.

The Christian has vastly greater assurance of faith, infinitely more proofs that God will keep his promises. Not only the whole history of Israel, and the sending of his Son, but the whole history of the Christian church testifies that God will not fail nor forsake his children.

There is great power in the assurance that we are doing God's will and carrying out his plans, doing the work he has given us to do. This makes mighty men. This gives power and hope to the weakest and in the darkest times.

COURAGE will naturally follow this assurance. 6. **Be strong and of a good courage.** "Be strong and firm, or vigorous. Michaelis remarks that the Hebrew verb 'to be strong' denotes strength of hand and arm to lay hold of and retain anything; while 'to be of good courage,' 'to be firm,' denotes rather firmness in the knees, and ability to maintain one's position against the attack of foes. The expression occurs with increasing emphasis four times in this chapter." — *Rev. Dr. Steele*. Courage — not so much physical courage as moral courage — is greatly needed in our day to stand by what is right at all costs; to conquer besetting sins; to resist the tides of fashionable wrong; to carry on God's work and uphold God's truth. Courage doubles the power of every effort, of every weapon; inspires the body and the spirit with strength.

CONTAGIOUSNESS OF COURAGE. — Mr. Blaine in his *Twenty Years in Congress*, in a strikingly just characterization of General Grant, remarks that "courage is as contagious as fear," and adds that "General Grant possessed in the highest degree that faculty which is essential to all great commanders, the faculty of imparting throughout the rank and file of his army the same determination to win with which he was himself always inspired."

7. Only be ^{thou} strong and very courageous, ^{that thou mayest} observe to do according to all the law, ¹ which Mō'ses my servant commanded thee: ² turn not from it ^{to} the right hand, or ^{to} the left, that thou ^{mayest prosper} ^{mayest have good} whithersoever thou goest.

8. ³ This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but ⁴ thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt ^a have good success.

9. ⁵ Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; ⁶ be not ^{afraid,} ^{affrighted,} neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God ^{is} with thee whithersoever thou goest.

10. Then Jōsh'u-a commanded the officers of the people, saying,

11. Pass through the ^{host,} ^{midst of the camp,} and command the people, saying, Prepare you victuals; for ⁷ within three days ye ^{shall} ^{are to} pass over this Jor'dan, to go in to possess the land, which the LORD your God giveth you to possess it.

¹ Num. 27: 23; Deut. 31: 7; Josh. 11: 15.

² Deut. 5: 32.

³ Deut. 17: 18, 19.

⁴ Ps. 1: 2.

⁵ Deut. 31: 7.

⁶ Ps. 27: 1; Jer. 1: 8.

⁷ Josh. 3: 2; Deut. 9: 1.

^a Or, do wisely, v. 7.

V. The Essential Condition of Success. — Vs. 7, 8. 7. Be thou strong and very courageous, for great strength, firmness of will, patience, and courage would be required to observe to do according to all the law, because the temptations to worldliness and idolatry were very great. The people were but partially trained, and sometimes resisted authority, and rebelled against the restraints of the law. There would be a great pressure to turn from the right, because expedience or policy seemed to demand it. Turn not from it to the right hand, or to the left. Neither by steadily pursuing a wrong way, as Bunyan's Christian turned into By-path Meadow, and found himself in Giant Despair's castle; nor by wandering this way and that from the narrow way as flower or scene allures him.

The path of duty is like a direct road to success, and moving from it in either direction leads to disaster and defeat. "Note the terms *righteousness*, *rectitude*, *uprightness* and, in matters of opinion, *orthodox*, while the word 'wrong' is etymologically akin to 'wrung,' twisted." — D. Steele.

THE MEANS. 8. This book of the law which God had been giving them, and which Moses doubtless wrote down during the long sojourn in the wilderness. How much of the Pentateuch, as we have it, was included is unsettled.

The law must be studied, taught continually, so that all might know what to do, and then they must obey to the letter and the spirit. Thy way prosperous . . . have good success. No one ever obeyed God's Word and failed of a life worth living. There is no other road to true success. There are other paths to wealth, but not to getting the most this world can give. There are other ways to seeming success, to applause, to honors, to thrones, to power, to delights, but no other to real success, to happiness, to usefulness, to goodness, to peace, to heaven.

"The Bible is
The Index to Eternity;
He cannot miss
Of endless bliss
That takes this chart to steer his voyage by." — Herbert.

Vs. 10, 11 are better considered in connection with the next lesson.

LESSON II. — October 13.

ISRAEL ENTERS THE LAND OF PROMISE.

Joshua 3: 5-17.

READ Joshua 2-4. COMMIT v. 17.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *And he led them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation.* — PSA. 107: 7.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

To those who have time and inclination an interesting comparison may be made between the various references to the twelve stones from the bed of Jordan (Josh. 4: 3; 4: 8; 4: 9; 4: 20). Consider whether you can make one harmonious story; whether Josh. 4: 9 refers to a different monument from the other passages; or is there a contradiction?

Also compare the history of the conquest as given in Judges 1, stated there to be *after* Joshua's death, with the account given in Joshua as taking place during his life. Were these two partly contradictory accounts of the same conquest, or true accounts of different conquests, the one completing the other?

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Here is first a good geography lesson for the Travel club and for those who make maps of sand or pulp.

Get the central thought of the lesson as a shining lamp upon our present way.

Eternal principles unfolded in the history are equally applicable to our own daily life. Principles are eternal. Applications of them vary from day to day.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The Expositor's Bible on "Joshua" is excellent. W. W. White's *Studies in Old Testament Characters*; Geikie, 2: 429, etc.

Prof. Geo. Adam Smith's *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, pp. 266-278, and appendix II., pp. 659-662; Prof. Ira M. Price's *Syllabus of Old Testament History*; *The Polychrome Bible* on "Joshua," by W. A. Bennett, gives in colors the various sources from which this account is supposed to be constructed. See also "Joshua" in the *Temple Series of Bible Handbooks*. The Tel-el-Amarna Tablets, in Pinches' *Old Testament in the Light of the Historical Records*. See an excellent article in *Bibliotheca Sacra*, July, 1904, by Louise Seymour Houghton, on "When did Israel enter Canaan?"

LITERARY REFERENCES.

See account of crossing the Danube in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, Milman's edition, vol. III., p. 321. Poem by Anderson, "The River Jordan."

LEARN BY HEART.

V. 17; Isa. 43: 1, 2; 40: 28-31.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Come, ye faithful; raise the strain."
"Onward, Christian soldiers."

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Taking Possession of Our Promised Land.

INTRODUCTION. THE TWO ACCOUNTS.

I. PREPARATION OF THE PEOPLE FOR CROSSING THE JORDAN (Josh. 1: 10-3: 4).

Announcement Food. Spies.
Moving the camp. Information. Sanctifying.

II. PROVIDENTIAL PREPARATIONS.

The state of the country.

III. TRAINING THE PEOPLE IN COURAGE AND FAITH (vs. 6-11).

IV. FACING THE DIFFICULTY (vs. 12-15).

The Jordan at flood.
Aid from difficulties.

V. THE PROVIDENTIAL MIRACLE (v. 16).

The secondary cause of the drying up of the Jordan.
Interesting illustrations.

VI. CROSSING INTO THE PROMISED LAND (v. 17).

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The preparations to be made.
The condition of Palestine at this time.
The Jordan at flood-tide.
How this great difficulty was a means of safety and success.
Why the ark was placed in midstream.
Was there any natural cause used in this miracle?
Memorials. Their value.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — On the tenth day of the first month, early in April, was the crossing of Jordan. "It was the anniversary of the day on which, 40 years before, the Israelites

had been directed to take up the lambs for the first Passover in Egypt." — *Deane*.

This lesson closely follows the last.

Place. — At Abel Shittim, "The Meadow of the Acacias," near the fords of the Jordan on the east bank, opposite Jericho. At the foot of the Moabite mountains.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Will you decide, whatever the difficulties, to believe in God's promises and in Jesus Christ, and thus take possession of the Christian's Promised Land?

THE TWO ACCOUNTS. The history of the conquest of Palestine in Joshua and the account in the first chapter of Judges are assumed by certain scholars to be parallel accounts covering the same ground. By assuming (1) that Joshua was written at a late date and therefore is unhistorical; (2) that the first statement in Judges to the effect that the events described in that chapter took place *after* the death of Joshua is untrue and a late addition; and (3) that the conquest described in Joshua was so complete that there need be no further conflict, — it is taken for granted that the two accounts describe the same period, and are, therefore, contradictory and unhistorical.

But as the accounts stand in the Bible there is no contradiction, and they accord with what has repeatedly taken place in well-known history. The conflicts in the early conquest would have to be repeated more than once in later history.

For instance, the conflicts of the early settlers in this country with the Indians had to be repeated again and again, even after great victories.

So in English history when England was divided into small kingdoms and the Anglo-Saxons and Northmen conquered the land.

So the reformations of Hezekiah and Josiah, sweeping away the high places, had to be repeated after a few years.

It is always so in secular and religious conquests.

It is not in accordance with logic or with fact to argue from the assumption that two somewhat similar accounts stated in the history to belong to two different periods must be two contradictory stories of the same events.

In my last parish two institutions, a library and a hospital, were founded within thirty years of each other by two different persons, each named Mary Ann Morse, but unrelated even by marriage. It would be a false use of the higher criticism to insist at some time in the future that the story of these two facts could not be true, but were merely variant accounts of a single fact.

1. Preparation of the People for Crossing the Jordan. — Josh. 1: 10—3: 5.

1. The announcement that the time to cross was at hand to a people who saw an impassable flood in front of them.

2. Preparation of victuals; not merely the manna, but the fruits of the fertile country in which they were encamped.

3. Spies who could swim the deep and swift river were sent across to investigate the condition of things on the other side and to report. A very interesting story, which the scholars should read.

4. The camp was moved to the lower level nearer the river.

5. Officers were sent throughout the camp to instruct the people what to do.

6. The people were commanded to (v. 5) **Sanctify yourselves**, make special spiritual preparation, by washing their persons and their garments, and abstaining from everything that might indispose their minds to a serious and devout attention to the miracle about to be wrought in their behalf. The object was to turn their hearts to God in faith, and prepare them to obey willingly, and to understand the full meaning and power of what God was doing for them.

Compare the "sanctifying" before they received the Law at Sinai. See also Lev. 20: 7, 8; 1 Sam. 16: 5; Joel 2: 16.

5. And Jōsh'u-a said unto the people, ¹ Sanctify yourselves: for ^{to-morrow} the LORD will do wonders among you.

6. And Jōsh'u-a spake unto the priests, saying, ² Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.

¹ Ex. 19: 10; Lev. 20: 7; Josh. 7: 13.

² Num. 4: 15.

II. Providential Preparations. Whether we regard the exodus and conquest to have taken place under Thothmes III. or IV. of the 18th dynasty of Egypt, between 1500 and 1400 B. C., as some scholars do (see *Polychrome Bible* on "Joshua," etc.), or under Ramses II. and successors of the 19th dynasty, 1300-1200 B. C., as is the more popular view at present (see arguments in favor of each view in *Bib. Sac.*, July, 1904), in either case the situation in Palestine was peculiarly favorable to the conquest.

The Tel-el-Amarna letters, clay tablets about the size of the palm of a small hand, discovered in 1888 at Amarna, 180 miles south of Cairo, were written about B. C. 1587-1340, and sent between Egypt and Palestine. They show the condition of Palestine at that date. They mention the Habîri, which some regard as meaning the Hebrews. "They mention names which must be transliterated 'Jacob-el,' 'Joseph-el.'" While the country was nominally under Egypt they picture it as disturbed and unsettled.

"Our early information agrees with the book of Joshua in representing Palestine as divided up among a number of small city-states, each with its own king." — *Polychrome Bible*, note, p. 47. "This mixed population, in this small bit of territory, overrun and plundered by every crossing army for hundreds of years, was the problem which faced the invading Israelites. Separated into small clans, or centered in small cities, some of them well walled and fortified, without any central organization, or any common bond of unity, these people became an easy prey even to such an army as that with which Joshua crossed the Jordan." — *Prof. Ira M. Price in The Monuments and the Old Testament*.

"The people of Canaan also, — the Jebusites, Perizzites, and the rest, — were pretty well demoralized; for Thothmes III. by no means paused at defeating the Hittites. The story of his campaign, inscribed in the temple at Karnak, names 120 conquered towns in Canaan, many of them familiar names, and shows him to have overrun the entire country from Galilee to the southern desert.

"Now, we know that when the children of Israel emerged from the desert on the east of Jordan a widespread fear of them prevailed in Canaan; and, having learned from tablets and inscriptions that at the time of Thothmes III. the Canaanites were a highly civilized people, far in advance of Egypt in arts and education, well protected in their cities and villages, furnished with chariots and arms, and familiar with the art of war, we are impelled to ask the cause of that deep-seated terror at the approach of a wandering desert horde of runaway slaves. . . . Nothing short of their overwhelming defeat by Thothmes III. and the continued oppression of his immediate successors can account for their willingness to consider the claim of the God of the Hebrews that his people had rights in this land." — *Mrs. Houghton in Bibliotheca Sacra*.

Practically the same state of things occurred in Palestine after the death of Ramses II. Thus the way was prepared for the entrance of the Israelites. There was no effective control by the Egyptians. The people were divided and quarreled among themselves. They had been weakened in courage, in numbers, and in means of defense.

III. The Training of the People in Courage and Faith. — Vs. 6-11. Before the actual entrance upon the conquest, which meant life or death, and from which there was no possible return over the swollen river — for the crossing was like Cortez' burning of his ships — it was needful once more to test the people, and prove to them that God could and would make them successful.

(1) **6. They took up the ark of the covenant.** The symbol of God's presence and of his covenant promise and their covenant of obedience. (See Lesson V., Third Quarter.) **Went before the people.** There was to be a space of 2,000 cubits, or nearly three-quarters of a mile, between the ark and the people, so that all could see the sacred symbol of the divine presence (Josh. 3: 4), which could not be done if the ark was closely surrounded by a crowd.

(2) **7. And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee.** Make thee great, put honor upon thee, as the leader and commander of the people.

7. And the LORD said unto Jōsh'u-a, This day will I begin to ¹magnify thee in the sight of all Is'ra-el, that they may know that, ²as I was with Moses, ^{so} I will be with thee.

8. And thou shalt command ³the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the ^{water} of Jor'dan, ^{waters} ye shall stand still in Jor'dan.

9. And Jōsh'u-a said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the LORD your God.

10. And Jōsh'u-a said, Hereby ye shall know that ⁵the living God ^{is} among you, and ^{that} he will without fail ⁶drive out from before you the ^{Ca'naan-ites,} ^{Ca'naan-ite,} and the ^{Hit'tites,} ^{Hit'tite,} and the ^{Hi'vites,} ^{Hi'vite,} and the ^{Per'iz-zites,} ^{Per'iz-zite,} and the ^{Gir'ga-shites,} ^{Gir'ga-shite,} and the ^{Am'or-ites,} ^{Am'or-ite,} and the ^{Jeb'u-sites,} ^{Jeb'u-site.}

11. Behold, the ark of the covenant of ⁷the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jor'dan.

12. Now therefore ⁸take you twelve men out of the tribes of Is'ra-el, ^{out of} ^{for} every tribe a man.

¹ Josh. 4: 14.

² Josh. 1: 5.

³ V. 3.

⁴ V. 17.

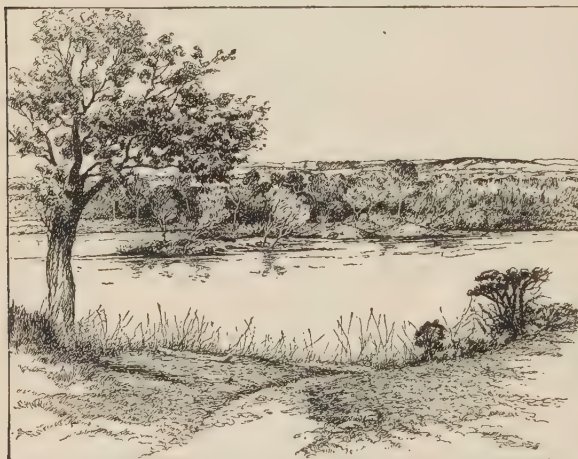
⁵ Deut. 5: 26; 1 Sam 17: 26; Matt. 16:

16; 1 Thes. 1: 9.

⁶ Ex. 33: 2; Deut. 7: 1; Psa. 44: 2.

⁷ V. 13.

⁸ Josh. 4: 2.



From a Photograph by Bonfils.

Fords of the Jordan, near Jericho.

Henceforth he would be accepted as the true successor of Moses. Henceforth no doubting, no questioning who should be the leader, nor whether their leader was worthy of trust.

(3) The assurance of faith.

10. Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you. By a work that only divine power could perform he would prove that he could and would give them the victory over the dangers and difficulties they greatly feared, and that he would without fail drive out from before them those who then possessed the land. By

what God has done we know what he can do, and will do. **Canaanites**, "lowlanders," as the **Amorites** were "highlanders," occupying the heights west of the Dead Sea. Compare the Scotch highlanders and lowlanders. **Hittites**, the powerful nation located to the north in the region of Mt. Lebanon and beyond to the Euphrates. Within a few years have been discovered monuments and inscriptions of this hitherto unknown people. **The Jebusites**, a Canaanite tribe, were in possession of the central highlands around Jerusalem, their stronghold.

11. Behold, the ark . . . of the Lord of all the earth. Who, therefore, has the right and the power to give you the land. **Passeth over before you.** To lead you, to make the way for you, to prove that it is safe for you to follow, to show that the power and the victory are from God.

IV. **Facing the Difficulty.** — Vs. 12-15. 12. Now therefore take you twelve men. To bring memorial stones from the river bed, as described later on.

13. And it shall come to pass, ^{1 as soon as} ^{when} the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, ² the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jor'dan, ^{that} ^{that} the waters of Jor'dan shall be cut off ^{from} ^{even} the waters that come down from above; and they ³ shall stand ^{upon an} ^{in one} heap.

14. And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jor'dan, ^{and} the priests ^{bearing} ^{that bare} the ⁴ ark of the covenant ^{being} before the people;

15. ^{And as} ^{and when} they that bare the ark were come unto Jor'dan, and ⁵ the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the ^{brim} ^{brink} of the water, (for ⁶ Jor'dan overfloweth all ^{his} ^{its} banks ⁷ all the time of harvest,)

16. ^{That} ^{that} the waters which came down from above stood, ^{and} ^{and} rose up ^{upon an} ^{heap} very far from the city Ad'am, ^{that is beside} ⁸ Zar'e-tan: ^{and those that} ^{came} ^{went} down ⁹ toward the sea of the ^{plain,} ^{even} ¹⁰ the salt sea, failed, ^{and were} ^{Ar'a-bah,} ^{even} the Salt Sea, were wholly cut off: and the people passed over right against Jër'i-chō.

¹ Vs. 15, 16.

² V. 11.

³ Psa. 78: 13; 114: 3.

⁴ Acts 7: 45.

⁵ V. 13.

⁶ 1 Chron. 12: 15; Jer. 12: 5; 49: 19.

⁷ Josh. 4: 18; 5: 10, 12.

⁸ 1 Kings 4: 12; 7: 46.

⁹ Deut. 3: 17.

¹⁰ Gen. 14: 3; Num. 34: 3.

13. And it shall come to pass. This verse is the promise of what is described in v. 16 as fulfilled. **Soles of the feet . . . rest in the waters.** There was not a sign or proof of the way across till, through believing the promise, they actually touched the flood.

THE JORDAN AT FLOOD-TIDE. 15. For Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest, *i. e.*, the barley harvest, which is during the latter part of March and first of April in this warm and sheltered region. Dr. Thomson says that he has visited this place "early in April, and found the barley harvest around Jericho already ended." Hon. Selah Merrill, for many years our consul at Jerusalem, says in the *Sunday School Times*, "the difference between harvest time in the Jordan Valley and in the mountains varies from two to five weeks. . . . The Jordan Valley is the winter resort of many of the Arab tribes in Bashan and Moab. During this season the climate there is as lovely as could be desired. The air is soft and mild, and green fields are on every hand."

"The river at this place is about 100 feet wide, and the margin overflowed about 400 feet more, making about 500 feet in total width."—*Land and Book*, new ed., I., 362, 363. Others represent the width as much greater. The English expedition down the Jordan speaks of the flood in winter as extending for the width of half a mile.—*Journal of Geological Society*, XVIII., 116. President Bartlett, when traveling in Palestine, found, on the 22d of March, the Jordan "rushing along like a mill-race, and though it had fallen from its greatest height, the proper banks of the channel were invisible, and indicated only by lines of oleanders and other shrubs and trees."—*From Egypt to Palestine*, p. 451.

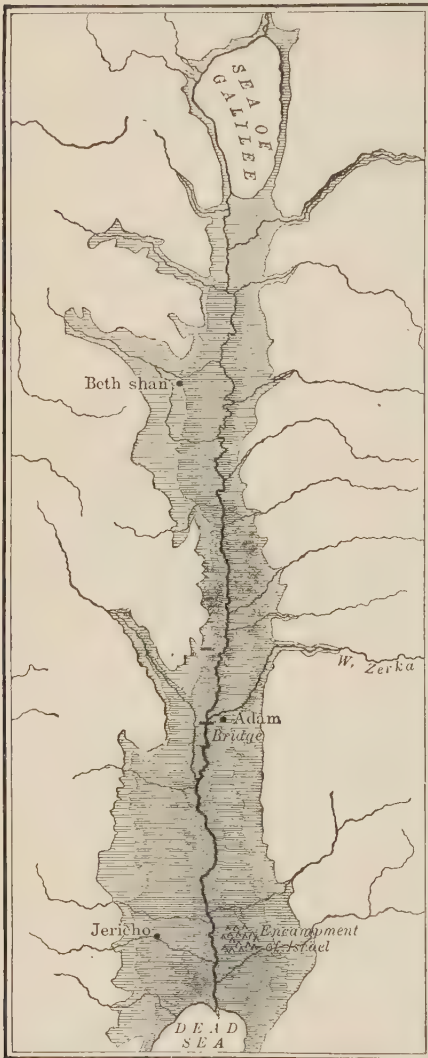
The cause of this great amount of water is found in the melting snows of Lebanon. At some other times the river can be easily forded.

HELP FROM DIFFICULTIES. At first thought it would seem that this was a most unfavorable time to cross; but with God to make a way through the waters the greatest advantage grew out of the obstacle itself. (1) It put their enemies off their guard. They felt perfectly safe, and, therefore, made no preparations to resist an attack which seemed impossible. (2) It was the season when they could find abundance of food. (3) The wonder-work of God gave the Israelites courage and faith, while (4) it inspired their enemies with terror. So often the clouds make a glorious sunset.

V. The Providential Miracle.—V. 16. The waters . . . rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam. The revisions give the correct translation "in one heap, a great way off, at Adam." Adam was probably at the Damieh ford just above the mouth of the Jabbok, 17 miles above the Israelites' encampment. Here are the remains of an ancient bridge. Here is a sudden break in the geological formation, and the river flows between two ridges of mountains on either side, or, as Prof. G. F. Wright suggests, the elevation of the bed of the river in this volcanic region, where a landslide or the fall of a cliff could easily block up the waters, in which case the waters would accumulate above the dam, and form a great lake extending far up the river, while the waters below

17. And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jor'dan,¹ and all ^{the Is'ra-el-ites} ^{Is'ra-el} passed over on dry ground, until all the ^{people} ^{nation} were passed clean over Jor'dan.

¹ Ex. 14: 29.



Map of the Jordan Valley.

Showing its banks of different altitudes, and where the waters were dammed up for the Israelites to cross.

would all flow away into the Dead Sea, leaving the bed of the river comparatively dry. And this would continue till the mass of water above had become so great as to break through the obstacle. In the meantime the Israelites could cross over wherever the bottom was hard enough, and could all reach the other side in a few hours.

"Here was a particular use, for a moral purpose, of the subterranean forces which have so long operated in producing the great depression of the Jordan Valley. This does not in any degree detract from the divine power displayed in them. They may be compared to the explosion of a mine which has been prepared for a particular emergency, such as occurs when an enemy is directly over it. Since its explosion is not left to chance, but is brought about at a particular time to accomplish a particular purpose, it is lifted out of the category of the established order of nature, and made to conform to the definition of the immediate acts of a free will. In these cases the accomplishments are also so clearly superhuman that they are indubitably miraculous.

"Again we repeat that this explanation of the miracle, while it strongly confirms the truth of the record, does not in the least degree impair the miraculous character of the event. The use of these natural forces to accomplish the moral purposes of the catastrophe involves the direct action of the Creator as really as the aiming and firing of a gun at a mark does that of a free human agent." — *Prof. Geo. F. Wright.*

AN INTERESTING HISTORICAL EXAMPLE. In the *Encyclopedia Biblica*, art. "Jericho," is given an account of a similar damming up of the Jordan in this neighborhood in A. D. 1266. A lofty mound which overlooked the river on the west had fallen into it and dammed it up when the Jordan was in full flood, as in Joshua's time. The waters above spread out into a great lake, while the river below ran dry. The dam held "from midnight until the fourth hour of the day."

VI. The Crossing into the Promised Land.—V. 17. And the priests that bare the ark. When they touched the water the stream subsided, and they bore the ark into the middle of the river-bed, and

there stood firm on dry ground, with good footing and without flinching from fear of the waters rushing upon them from above. This required no little faith. The priests were about three-fifths of a mile upstream above the people, and were thus seen by all; and their faith encouraged the people to venture into the bed of the river. **And all the Israelites passed over on dry ground.**

It is probable that "on the morning of the crossing the people were encamped for miles along the river, each kindred by itself." — *Dr. Bennett in Temple Bible Characters, "Joshua."* It is thus that they could make the crossing in a short time. There were miles of dry river-bed. C. M. Doughty, in his *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, describing a great pilgrim caravan, writes that there go commonly three or four camels abreast, and the length of the slow-footed multitude of men and cattle is near two miles, and the width some two hundred yards. But the great stretch of the Israelites along the river-bank, and the short distance across the river, from a quarter of a mile to a mile, would enable all to pass in a very few hours, and stand for the first time in their new home. They encamped at Gilgal, three or four miles from the river, toward Jericho, in a broad, open plain. Then the river returned to its usual course. There was no retreat now.

CONTRAST THE GOTHs CROSSING THE DANUBE. "When in the fourth century of the Christian era, the Goths, amounting to nearly one million persons of both sexes and of all ages, crossed the Danube, which had been swelled by incessant rains, a large fleet of vessels, of boats, and of canoes was provided; yet many days and nights they passed and repassed with indefatigable toil, and, notwithstanding the most strenuous efforts of the officers, many were swept away and drowned by the rapid violence of the current." — *Thornley Smith.*

VII. **Memorials.** — The twelve chosen men carried each one a large stone from the bottom of the river, and placed them in a conspicuous place as a memorial of the great thing God had done for them. They gave frequent occasion for repeating this story to children and children's children, as a training in faith, hope, and love to God. It was a perpetual object-lesson and education. Another heap was placed in the bed of the river, marking the spot where the ark was placed while the people were crossing.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. "The wonderful story of God's chosen people is itself a greater miracle than any exhibition of divine power it records." — *Foakes-Jackson.*

2. The church sees before her her promised land, the whole earth redeemed to Christ. Those parts of our country which are more settled, like the two and one-half tribes, are to send their warriors to help the others to subdue the newer portions to Christ.

Each of us has a promised land, the ideal character, the perfect man in Christ Jesus.

3. The whole world has received its marching orders, Onward, forward, to Christ, to God, to goodness, to usefulness.

"They must upward still and onward, who would keep abreast of truth;
Lo, before us gleam her camp fires: we ourselves must Pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea."
— *Lowell.*

4. For every special work there is need of special preparation. There is no sudden leaping into great goodness or great usefulness. Preparations for a voyage are often long and careful, though the start may be sudden. Lightning seems to flash suddenly from the clouds, but the electricity has been gathering for hours.

5. **MINISTERS AND TEACHERS MUST LEAD THE WAY.** "They are to be ever foremost in every good work. An officer cheers his men into action not from behind, but from the front. So the officer of God's army should be in the van of its progress. In zeal for his Master's cause, in unwearied efforts to promote it, in purity of life, in acts of love to the sick and aged, in public spirit, in honor, in truth, in self-command, in self-abnegation, the ordained servant of God should be in the fore-front of the grand army. But the army must follow its leaders." — *J. J. Lias.* One must preach an ideal beyond what he has attained, but not beyond what he is sincerely trying to reach.

"Oh, may thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold,
Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,
And win with them the victor's crown of gold.

"O blest Communion, fellowship divine:
We feebly struggle; they in glory shine;
Yet all are one in thee, for all are thine."

6. God still does wondrous things for his people, marvels that prove that he is with

them, and which encourage them to go on in the conquest of evil, — marvels of converting power, of holy lives, of triumph over temptation, trouble, and death.

7. We know by what God has done for us that he will continue to do; by the fulfilment of one promise that he will fulfil the others. As David knew, by God's aid in killing the lion and the bear, that he would aid him in conquering Goliath.

8. We need to keep in mind what God has done for us in the past. The Christian sacraments are memorials which hold the great truths of the gospel before the mind. They are irrefragable witnesses to the great facts of Christianity. They are a public and unceasing testimony to the world about God and Christ and the gospel. Everywhere their voice is heard. They are an easy occasion and method of teaching the great truths of religion. The Sabbath, the Lord's Supper, Easter, Christmas, are Christian memorials. The Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Day, New Year's, Decoration Day are patriotic memorials. Birthdays, marriage anniversaries, commencement days, etc., are personal memorials. Rightly kept, all these are a means of education and of perpetuating great truths.

When Bunyan's Pilgrim had escaped from the castle of Giant Despair, he put up a monument of God's mercy and of warning.

LESSON III. — October 20.

THE CAPTURE OF JERICO. — Joshua 6: 8-20.

READ Joshua 5-8. COMMIT v. 20.

LET THIS BE A DAY OF PRAYER FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days.* — HEB. 11: 30.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

The great lesson for us lies in using this physical warfare as a type of our moral warfare against sin. Therefore, make a study of the Bible applications of warfare to spiritual conflicts, and, placing your results

alongside of the story of to-day's lesson, see in how many respects the one illustrates the other. A good concordance will furnish you abundant texts, — as "overcoming" in Revelation 2 and 3; the enemy and the armor in Eph. 6: 10-18; etc.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

There is in boys a tendency to fight, to gain some kind of conquest. The teacher can use this lesson to turn this tendency into the right channels.

Ask them what qualities were required to gain this conquest.

Then show them that all these qualities are required and exercised in fighting wrong, in the conquest of the soul, subduing every passion and thought and act to be subservient to God and right and reason and all the higher nature of the soul. They are required and exercised in the conquest of the world to Christ and righteousness.

The whole value of their lives, here and forever, depends on their conquest of life, driving out every tribe of evil, destroying every stronghold of wrong.

And they have the same God to help them with wonders greater than falling of the walls of Jericho.

LEARN BY HEART.

Eph. 6: 11-13; Rev. 2: 7; 3: 12.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Will you to-day enlist in the warfare against sin under the banner of Jesus the Christ?

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — April, about B. C. 1451, according to the margins of our Bibles. Scholars are divided as to the period, whether it be in the vicinity of the Tel-el-Amarna letters before B. C. 1400, or in the century following Ramses II. between B. C. 1200 and 1300.

Place. — Gilgal and Jericho in the plain on the west side of the Jordan.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Concerning the walls of Jericho there is some new information in Professor Bliss' "Mounds of Palestine" in *Recent Research in Bible Lands*, p. 41. Prof. Geo. Adam Smith throws new light on the subject in his *Historical Geography*, p. 268.

The introduction to the *Cambridge Bible* has some wise remarks concerning the Conquest.

The *Polychrome Bible*, "Joshua," explains the meaning of "devoted" here. Stanley's *History of the Jewish Church*, Vol. II., on this conquest. Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, 2: 444-452.

With reference to the ideas with which the Israelites entered Canaan, consult a sermon by Phillips Brooks, fifth series, Sermon XVII., entitled "New Experiences."

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Bunyan's *Holy War*, "The Capture of Mansoul," is a good illustration. "The Conquest of Jericho," a poem by Mary E. Brooks. "The Taking of Jericho," a poem by the Wesleys is an application of this story to the overthrow of sin in the heart.

Milton, *Paradise Regained*, Bk. 2, line 20.

Dante's *Purgatorio*, Chap. XX., lines 107, 108.

Some idea of the effect of this conquest may be inferred from E. E. Hale's story of "Hands Off," in his *Christmas in a Palace*.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Conquest of the Soul and of the World to Christ.

I. THE CITY OF JERICO.

II. RELIGIOUS PREPARATIONS (Joshua 5).

The covenant. The Passover. The captain of the Lord's host.

III. THE RIGHT OF ISRAEL TO THE LAND.

IV. THE FALL OF JERICO (vs. 8-16, 20).

The order of march.
The method of attack.
The fall of the city walls.
The providential cause.

V. JERICO "DEVOTED" (vs. 17-25).

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"For all the saints who from their labors rest."
"The banner of Immanuel."

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Jericho at this time.

What right had the Israelites to Canaan?

What was the effect of this conquest on the history of the world?

Compare the occupation of America by the European nations.

What was the advantage of this method of attack on the Israelites?

Why were the Israelites forbidden to take the spoils for themselves?

Compare this story with Bunyan's capture of Mansoul in his *Holy War*.

I. The City of Jericho. — ITS SITUATION. About three miles a little to the north-west of Gilgal, where the Israelites were encamped, was the walled city of Jericho, amid its groves of palms, on the western border of the Jordan plain at the foot of the hills. It was called the *City of Palms*, from a glorious palm forest which stretched along the valley. Copious fountains and streams nourished a luxuriant herbage and rich gardens. "It was the gateway of a province, the emporium of a large trade." — *G. A. Smith, Historical Geography*. "Its situation was such as must always have rendered its occupation necessary to any invader from that quarter. It was the key of Western Palestine, as standing at the entrance of the two main passes into the central mountains." — *Stanley*.

ITS SIZE. It must have been a very small city compared with modern cities. Only around a small city could Joshua's army have marched seven times in one day and have taken possession the same day.

ITS STRENGTH was great enough to resist a people with no more weapons of attack than were possessed by Joshua's army; and yet its walls were far from being as strong as we should imagine from what we have seen of the walls of old European cities. Dr. F. J. Bliss, who has investigated the remains of what is regarded as the site of ancient Jericho, found that the walls were built of *mud bricks*. He says, "I was able to recognize mud-brick walls at various levels. . . . I confess to the belief that this may be the wall that fell before the eyes of Joshua, the son of Nun." — *Recent Research*, pp. 40, 41. George Adam Smith says that "in war she has always been easily taken. That her walls fell down at the sound of Joshua's trumpets is no exaggeration, but the soberest summary of all her history. . . . Her people seem never to have been distinguished for bravery; and, indeed, in that climate how could they? Enervated by the great heat which degrades all the inhabitants of the Ghôr, and unable to endure on their bodies aught but linen (Josephus' *Wars*, 4: 8; 3), it was impossible they could be warriors. . . . We forget how



From a Photograph.

Gilgal, Plain of Jericho.

Here the twelve memorial stones were set up and the Tabernacle remained until removed to Shiloh.

ness, the righteousness of the kingdom of God. Hence everything must be done to impress this upon the minds of the people, and to train them for the fulfilling of the divine ideal and purpose.

So for us to-day religion lies at the foundation of our national hopes and of our individual character. As Carlyle says, the most important thing in any person or nation is his religion. Every new day, every new work, should be begun with religious feelings and religious acts. The whole of life should be lived not so much for self as for God's Cause. This transforms and transfigures daily living.

1. They renewed the covenant of circumcision, the token that they were the inheritors of the promises to Abraham.

2. They kept the Feast of the Passover, which deepened their religious life and revived their faith by the memory of the mighty and glorious things God had done for their nation in greater difficulties than they were now experiencing.

3. They began to eat of the fruit of the land, and the manna ceased to come. They learned that God was in the common things of daily life, as well as in special miraculous help. Henceforth, God would work through themselves, their courage, their faith, their skill, their daily strength, and thus bless them more fully than by any work for them without their participation. This shows how much they had gained by their past training.

4. They learned through his appearance to Joshua that the Lord God was still their commander-in-chief. He had not left nor forsaken them.

III. The Right of Israel to the Land.—The representation of the books of Joshua, Judges (2: 2), and of Deuteronomy is that the conquest of Canaan was in accordance with the plan and the command of God. And God always does and always commands only what is right. But how could it be right for one nation to drive another from their homes and destroy them?

Distinguish between a command of God to do a thing and the way some people execute the command. History abounds in good things done in a wicked way. We can approve of the doing, while condemning the way it was done.

Let us give attention to a few facts.

FIRST. The land of Canaan, from its nature and its situation, was the best place in the whole world for the home and training school of God's people.

SECOND. "The Israelites' sword in its bloodiest executions wrought a work of mercy for all the countries of the earth to the very end of the world"; on it "the happiness of the human race depended."—*Dr. Arnold*. The inhabitants must be destroyed, or they would destroy the kingdom of God in Israel. If the few who were spared contrary to orders exerted so baleful an influence, what would have been the result if a large body had remained? "If Israel had learned the ways of the heathen, if the worship of Chemosh and Molech and Astarte had superseded the worship of Jehovah, how had all the grand designs of redemption been frustrated in their development!"—*Bishop Wilberforce*. "If the Jews had failed, the world would have been lost. The true religion would have vanished, the mission of Christ would have been impossible. In these contests, on the fate of one of

near neighbors they had been to Sodom and Gomorrah. No great man was born in Jericho; no heroic deed was ever done in her."—*Historical Geography*.

II. Religious Preparations.—

Joshua 5. We wholly miss the meaning, the very soul, of this whole movement unless we realize that its object was not personal aggrandizement, not conquest for spoils and the enrichment of the victors; but was to make a home for true religion and a training school for righteousness.

8. And it ^{came to pass, was so, that} when Jōsh'u-a had spoken unto the people, ^{that} the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns ^{passed on} before the LORD ^{passed on,} and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them.

9. And the armed men went before the priests that blew with the trumpets, ¹ and the ^{rearward came rearward went} after the ark, *the priests* ^{going on, and} blowing with the trumpets: ^{as they went.}

10. And Jōsh'u-a ^{had} commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor ^{make any noise with your voice, let your voice be heard,} neither shall ^{any} word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.

11. So ^{he caused} the ark of the LORD ^{compassed to compass} the city, going about ^{it} it once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.

12. And Jōsh'u-a rose early in the morning, ² and the priests took up the ark of the LORD.

¹ Num. 10: 25.

² Deut. 31: 25; Lev. 27: 28; Mic. 4: 13.

these nations of Palestine, the happiness of the human race depended." — *Stanley*. Compare Edward E. Hale's story of "Hands Off."

There are several examples in history. For instance, the Roman victories changed the history of Europe. The Saxon and the Norman conquests of England have affected nearly the whole modern world for good. Perhaps the nearest modern parallel is the conquest from the scattered Indian tribes of North America by the white people of Europe. It would be impossible to tell what would have been the loss to the world if those tribes had remained the sole inhabitants of this country. They were not wicked like the Canaanites, and could not have demoralized the whites. The land was rightly populated by the whites, but no injustice or cruelty should have been committed. They should have been conquered to civilization and religion only by justice and love, as, in fact, was done in many cases.

THIRD. The conquered nations of Palestine were in the position of malefactors, criminals, lawbreakers, and corrupters of mankind; and their destruction was no more cruel and unjust than is the execution and imprisonment of criminals to-day. There are probably more persons in prison in civilized countries to-day than there were inhabitants of Palestine in Joshua's day. And almost every one of them necessarily brings suffering of some kind upon their relatives. "The heathenism of Palestine and Syria was so foul and degrading that there is no State, even at this time, which would not put it down, if necessary, by the severest penalties. It spread to Rome, was bewailed 1,500 years later by the satirists of the day, as a calamity marking the utter decay of the times (Juvenal, *Satires*, III., 62)." — *Geikie*. "It is an eternal necessity that a nation such as the majority of the Canaanites then were, sinking deeper and deeper into a slough of discord and moral perversity, must fall before a people roused to a higher life by the newly awakened energy of unanimous trust in a Power Divine." — *Ewald*. Remember how near Jericho was to Sodom and Gomorrah.

FOURTH. The destruction of criminals is no worse by means of other men with rightful authority than by disease, or the outworking of the laws of health, or the fires that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

FIFTH. It is well to notice that the Israelites avoided the cruelties and tortures common in those days; and that Joshua was careful to train them not to enter upon a warfare for personal gain.

IV. **The Fall of Jericho.** — Vs. 8-16, 20. 8. And it came to pass, etc. Better, "And it was according as Joshua said" in the previous verses of the chapter.

The plan of the attack was for all the men of war (v. 3) to march around the city once a day for six days, and on the seventh day to march around it seven times, the last time with a long blast of the trumpets and a great shout from all the men when the walls were to fall.

From the whole account we learn the order of procession. From whatever different sources the present account may have been drawn, the story is one harmonious statement of the facts. The order of march seems to have been as follows:

13. And ^{the} seven priests bearing ^{the} seven trumpets of rams' horns before the ark of the LORD went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; ^{but the rereward and the rearward} came after the ark of the LORD, ^{the priests} ^{going on, and} blowing with the trumpets: ^{as they went.}

14. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days.

15. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early ^{about} ^{at} the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

16. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Jōsh'u-a said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city.

FIRST. A vanguard of armed men who marched in silence at the head of the procession (vs. 9, 10). They were to utter no vainglorious speeches — such as Goliath did when he met David, and De Bohun at Bannockburn — to give no answer to the taunts which the men on the walls may have thrown at them. It was an ominous, portentous silence “as deep as eternity,” “silence that oppresses with too great a weight,” the silence in the center of the cyclone before it bursts forth in its career of devastation.

“A horrid stillness first invades the ear,
And in that silence we the tempest fear.”
— Dryden.

“There are moments when silence prolonged and un-
broken,
More expressive may be than all words ever spoken.”
— Owen Meredith.

SECOND. — Vs. 8, 13. Then followed a company of seven priests, doubtless in their rich, flowing, priestly garments, showing to the Jericho people on the walls that what they were doing was in the service and with the power of Jehovah, who had made a path for the Israelites through Jordan. These were blowing trumpets of rams' horns, the Jubilee trumpets, the kind that ushered in the New Year (Lev. 23: 24) and announced the year of Jubilee (Lev. 25: 9). These were like the bands which lead processions in our day with marching music to which the people keep step.

THIRD. After these came the Ark of the Covenant borne by priests, the Ark which stood in the river-bed while the people were crossing, the Ark which showed that the Lord God was leading and defending them, but on condition that the Israelites kept their part of the covenant.

FOURTH. After these came the (v. 13) rereward, *i. e.*, rear guard, consisting of the rest of the men of Israel, marching in silence around the city. No sign of triumph was to be raised, no words of rejoicing over the foe, nor of consciousness of strength. But in solemn, reverent silence, as if God alone were speaking to them, in meditation and silent prayer they were to move around the city, as if engaged in a religious service.

FOR SIX SUCCESSIVE DAYS. — V. 14. This was trying to their faith, and may have seemed to some to be a hopeless waste of time. Some one of the seven days must have been a Sabbath, and the action a breaking of the Sabbath; but it was a solemn, religious service, and no more broke the Sabbath than does the marching of the Salvation Army to draw men to their meetings.

THE SEVENTH DAY. — Vs. 15, 16, 20. On this day the circuit was made seven times in succession. At the seventh time, while the men were still somewhere around the city walls, but probably not wholly surrounding the city, the signal was given as announced (v. 5) by a long blast of the trumpets, different from the marching music, and all the men (v. 20) shouted with a great shout.

The Orientals take a peculiar delight in noise. “When our people are in dead earnest, they are generally silent; but the more in earnest an Oriental is, the louder he shouts. Even Arab boatmen, when in great danger, and every man is doing his utmost in struggling with the waves, will waste a lot of strength and breath in shouting.” — *Hon. Selah Merrill.*

“When pealed thy wild shout to the blue-mantled sky
The foeman shrank back as he heard it pass by;

The torches grew pale in the halls of their mirth,
And turret and battlement crumbled to earth.”

— Mary E. Brooks.

17. And the city shall be ^{accursed, even} it and all that ^{are} therein, to the LORD: only Rā'hāb the harlot shall live, she and all that ^{are} with her in the house, because ¹ she hid the messengers that we sent.

18. And ye, ² in any wise keep ^{yourselves} from the ^{accursed} thing, lest ye make ^{yourself} ^{accursed}, when ye take of the ^{accursed} thing, and ^{devoted} make the camp of Is'ra-el ^{a curse,} ^{accursed,} ³ and trouble it.

19. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, ^{are} ^{consecrated} ^{are} ^{holy} unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.

20. So the people shouted, ^{when} ^{and} the priests blew with the trumpets: and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, ^{and} ^{that} the people shouted with a great shout, ^{that} ^{and} ⁴ the wall fell down ^a flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

¹ Josh. 2: 4.

² Deut. 7: 26; Josh. 7: 1, 11, 12.

³ Josh. 7: 25.

⁴ V. 5; Heb. 11: 30.

^a Hebrew, *under it*.

The wall fell down flat. "This is a fine English phrase, but the text affirms no more than that so much of the wall as was in front of the storming party fell down just where it was. Doubtless the assaulters still had some climbing to do." — *Prof. Willis J. Beecher in Sunday School Times*. **Every man straight before him.** "It is not said that they formed a ring around the entire city. Apparently Rahab's part of the wall (Josh. 2: 15; 6: 22, 23) did not fall." — *W. J. Beecher*.

THE CAUSE OF THE FALL OF THE WALLS. Of course the shouting and the blare of the trumpets had no power to overthrow the broad walls of the city; but it connected the people with the miracle in outward form to show that only as they were really connected with it by faith would the work be done for them. There were probably some secondary means, like the wind that God used to make the Gulf of Suez passable for the Exodus. These "providential miracles" do not shut out the direct personal agency of God in doing the work or in timing it, but this kind of miracles connects the God of nature with the God of providence, and brings God's personal agency into closer contact with our daily experiences.

1. Prof. Geo. F. Wright, of Oberlin, thinks that the "mediate" cause of the fall of the wall was some subterranean earthquake which shook down the walls of the part of the city where the men were standing, or undermined them so that they sank. This is easily possible in that region of earthquakes.

2. It is not very likely that the explanation some have given is true, — that the keynote of the wall was struck by the tramping of the soldiers, the shouts of the people, and the blare of the trumpets, and that this caused the mud walls to fall. At the same time it is not absolutely impossible. "All structures, large or small, simple or complex, have a definite rate of vibration, depending on their material, size, and shape, as fixed as the fundamental note of a musical chord. When the bridge at Colebrooke Dale (the first iron bridge in the world) was building, a fiddler came along and said he could fiddle it down. The workmen laughed in scorn, and told him to fiddle away to his heart's content. He played until he struck the keynote of the bridge, and it swayed so violently that the astonished workmen commanded him to stop." "A strong gust of wind will uproot a majestic tree when it comes just in time with the tree's own swing or vibration." — *Professor Lovering, of Cambridge*. Tyndall tells us that "while away up amid the Alpine solitudes of Switzerland a few years ago, I noticed the muleteers tied up the bells of their mules, and was told that the protracted combined tinkling would start an avalanche." — *Harper's Young People*.

"What force least expected does the greatest damage to buildings?" is a question which a representative of the Indianapolis *News* asked a well-known architect. The architect's answer may be a surprise to those who do not understand that it is the regularity of vibration that makes it powerful.

"It is difficult to tell," replied the architect, "but I will venture to say that you would never expect violin-playing to injure the walls of a building. Yet it certainly does. There have been instances when the walls of stone and brick structures have been seriously damaged by the vibrations from a violin. Of course these cases are unusual, but the facts are established.

“The vibrations of a violin are really serious in their unseen, unbounded force, and when they come with regularity they exercise an influence upon structures of brick, stone, or iron. Of course it takes continuous playing for many years to loosen masonry or to make iron brittle, but it will do it in time.

“A man can feel the vibrations of a violin on an iron-clad ocean vessel, and at the same time be unable to hear the music.” — *Youth's Companion*.

V. **Jericho “Devoted.”** — Vs. 17-25. 17. **The city shall be accursed.** The word translated “accursed” means “devoted” as in the Revisions. It was all devoted to God, and none of it to be used for themselves. As for the people, they were to be executed for their sins and to keep every one trained in the Jericho influences from inoculating Israel with the poison of their religion and character. Whatever could be burned was destroyed by fire; gold, silver, and the other metals were put into the Lord's treasury.

The Israelites were forbidden to take any of the spoil, because they needed the lesson. “The people and cities of Canaan were rich; the Israelites were poor. Canaan had the resources of a somewhat high civilization; gold, silver, vessels of brass and of iron; goodly Babylonish garments—all dazzling before the eyes of a people forty years in a barren wilderness. Now, suppose the Lord had given them free license to plunder, to steal, and hide and appropriate all they could lay hands on! This movement for the conquest of Canaan would have become a savage, plundering, marauding expedition, not a whit above the demoralizing wars of all barbarous tribes upon nations largely in advance of themselves in wealth and luxury.” — *Cowles*.

As it was the people were taught to keep in mind the one object of all the care and training God had bestowed upon them, that they should be his people prepared to be the means of bringing all the world to him.

Only Rahab the harlot shall live; because of her aid to the spies, which may have arisen from her longing for a better life and a true religion. However bad her previous conduct, she seems to have repented and trusted in the true God, and lived a good life henceforth, or she would not have been married to a leading Israelite, an ancestor of Jesus, nor her name be one of the only three women named in his genealogy. A bad past life will not prevent future usefulness and blessing, always provided that the bad is forsaken and hated, and the soul turns to a higher life.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. The city of Jericho is an illustration or type of this sinful world, a stronghold to be conquered by God's people. It belongs of right to God. “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” No human power can subdue it to righteousness. Wickedness is entrenched in customs, fashions, society, selfish interests, and pleasures. Look at the numbers, the wealth, the rank, the armies, the principalities, and all powers of evil. Look at the massive walls of ignorance and passion. But the Captain of our salvation has come to enable his people to gain the victory.

2. The capture of Jericho illustrates the means by which the victory can be gained. “God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty” (1 Cor. 1: 27). Consider what Jesus has done in the world, — without rank, or riches, or armies, or earthly power, he has changed the whole world.

The armor and the weapons are spiritual, as described in Eph. 6: 10-18. Against “the spiritual hosts of wickedness,” the means of defence and attack are truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, the Word of God, salvation, prayer.

Here comes the means proposed by many schools, the giving up of this day and the whole week to prayer for the Sunday school, that all may belong to the army consecrated to overcome sin in the heart and in the world, under our great Captain, Jesus Christ.

3. Sin entrenched in our hearts, the evil passions, selfishness, and all the works of the flesh described in Gal. 5: 19-21, form a Jericho to be conquered for the kingdom of Christ with its beatitudes and commandments and fruits of the spirit.

4. Here is the greatest and most glorious conquest ever presented to man, under the greatest leader, with the greatest rewards, calling forth the best qualities, issuing in the best blessings to man.

5. Will you enlist? During the Civil War I went down to the scene of war to help the wounded, on both sides, and preach to the convalescents in camp. One of the booklets prepared by the Christian Commission to circulate among the soldiers was entitled, “Will you enlist?” showing how all the motives that would call them to enlist in the army of patriotism summoned them with a louder call to enlist in the army of our Lord.

6. Here is the field where all the higher qualities, all the desire for conflict, for overcoming, all courage, all heroism, all love, all devotion to a cause and a leader, find their best and noblest sphere of activity. "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Prov. 16: 32). The greatest battles ever fought, the greatest victories ever gained, the highest heroism ever shown, have been upon the battlefields of the heart.

7. In these moral conquests we can work out our salvation. God "worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." His Holy Spirit works wonders for us as real as those in Israel's history. He transforms the sinful heart into the city of God; but always through our willing and our working with him. He is ever training us to faith and courage and obedience and true religion, in order that he can grant us larger conquests and complete reception of the kingdom of heaven.

8. The rewards of him that overcometh. (See Revelation 2, 3.)

LESSON IV. — October 27.

CALEB'S FAITHFULNESS REWARDED.

Joshua 14: 6-15.

READ Joshua 14 and also Joshua 7-13. COMMIT vs. 7, 8.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things.* — MATT. 25: 23.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Make a study of the Bible teachings concerning "faithfulness" and its fruits, and write down the results.

Follow by a study of the Bible characters which illustrate faithfulness.

Recall historical examples illustrating faithfulness.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

See that the scholars read the intervening history.

On the previous Sabbath distribute among them the best known of the stories to tell in the class at the beginning of this lesson.

Set others to searching for memorable expressions in the history.

THE MAP. To understand the conquest it is necessary not only to look at the map, but to study it till the main outlines of the country are firmly fixed in the memory.

Use the map; have the scholars make a map or fill out an outline map.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Taking Possession of our Inheritance.

I. STORIES OF THE CONQUEST.

The Defeat at Ai.
The Story of Achan.
The Story of the Renewed Covenant.
The Story of the stratagem of the Gibeonites.
The Story of the battle at Gibeon.

II. CALEB: HIS CHARACTER AND CAREER (vs. 6-11).

III. CALEB'S INHERITANCE (vs. 12-15).

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 7, 8; Matt. 6: 33; 25: 29.

AGELESS HYMN.

"For all the saints who from"

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — The verses of the lesson belong about six years after the last lesson, toward the close of the first conquest of Canaan, and during its distribution among the tribes.

Place. — Joshua's capital was at Gilgal; Caleb's inheritance at Hebron, 20 miles south of Jerusalem.

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The disaster at Ai.
The fate of Achan.
The renewal of the covenant at Ebal and Gerizim.
"Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon."
Caleb's claim to Hebron.
His new conquest.
Faithfulness and its rewards.
Anakim in our inheritance.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Geo. A. Smith's *Historical Geography*.
Expositor's Bible. *Cambridge Bible*. *Poly-
 chrome Bible*. Stanley's *Jewish Church*.
Edersheim's Bible History, Vol. III.
Joshua, His Life and Times, by W. J.
 Deane. *Joshua and His Times* by Thorn-
 ley Smith. Matheson's *Representative Men*,

"Caleb the Explorer." Tuck's *Revelation
 by Character*, "Energetic Caleb."

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DE-
CIDING PRACTICAL
QUESTIONS.

Think of definite things in your home life and
 school life where faithfulness is especially needed,
 and decide what you will do about them.

I. Stories of the Conquest. FIRST. THE DEFEAT AT AI. — Josh. 7: 1-8: 29. Immediately after the fall of Jericho, Joshua proceeded to subdue the next stronghold, the city of Ai, 15 or 20 miles west of Jericho, in the highlands near Bethel. Here, unexpectedly, his army met with a defeat. It was a crushing blow, and unaccountable. The elders of Israel bowed in humiliation and prayer. Then it was learned that Achan had committed sin by transgressing the positive command of God in relation to the spoils of Jericho. The guilty one was discovered by lot. He was condemned and executed. Then, by a wise use of means, victory was gained, and the conquest went on.

This defeat taught the Israelites most impressively the absolute necessity of obedience to God. They were growing too self-confident, as if they need not make special exertions, but the Lord would give them success, anyway. God showed them that he could not fulfil his part of the covenant unless they fulfilled theirs. There can be no success without obedience to God. This was a lesson for all time, but frequently repeated in their experience. A defeat that grows out of too much confidence in self, or that comes from breaking God's laws, is often worth more to a people than a victory. So the pains which come from over-eating or misuse of the body may be the means of preserving life and health.

ILLUSTRATIONS. The famous battle at Thermopylæ was a defeat, but was a glorious moral victory. Longfellow's "Ladder of St. Augustine." Thus, the Battle of Bunker Hill was a defeat; yet we celebrate it, and build a monument for it, because this defeat was worth more than a victory. One of the most interesting references to this event is that of Hos. 2: 15, where it is said to the people of his day that the valley of Achor, "valley of trouble," where Achan was burned, should become a DOOR OF HOPE. As the putting away of Achan's covetousness, which is idolatry, became the condition of victory, so through this valley the Jews returned from exile in Babylon, when they had put away idolatry forever, and rebuilt their temple and city, a great victory.

SECOND. THE STORY OF ACHAN, WHO GAINED RICHES BY SINFUL PRACTICES. — Josh. 7: 13-26. This story is a tragedy of warning, a tragedy that is repeated in modern times almost every day. For the sake of riches he committed a secret crime, a direct disobedience, which at heart was treason and murder, as well as stealing and lying. It struck at the very life of the nation, as to-day all gains obtained by injustice, all riches gotten by corrupt practices, strike at the life of our nation.

Achan imagined that his crime was unknown, but it was like the revelations concerning men in high places which overflow in the newspapers of to-day; and they receive a punishment which overwhelms their families, as Achan's sin was visited upon his family.

Illustrations can be drawn from Æschylus' "Tragedy of Orestes," from the "Furies"; and from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *Richard III*. "The Dream of Eugene Aram" represents this man, a school teacher, as having murdered a man. After that he could not look in the faces of the innocent children. He buried the body, but had to take it up; he plunged it in a stream, but the stream ran dry; he covered it with leaves, but the wind blew them away.

"I knew my secret then was one
 The earth refused to keep,
 Or land or sea, though he should be
 Ten thousand fathoms deep.

"And lo! the universal air
 Seemed lit with ghastly flame;
 Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes
 Were looking down in blame."

THIRD. THE STORY OF THE RENEWED COVENANT. — Josh. 8: 30-35; Deut. 27, 28. By the victory over Ai the way was open to proceed further into the heart of the country, to Shechem in the valley between Mts. Ebal and Gerizim, and renew the covenant, as Moses in his farewell address had commanded them (Deut. 27: 1-14). Half of the tribes were arranged on Mt. Ebal, and the other six on Mt. Gerizim. The law in substance was written plainly before them on plastered stones. Then in that wonderfully clear air was read in the hearing of the people the law of Moses; and from Gerizim the

blessings that would follow obedience and from Ebal the curses that would follow disobedience (Deuteronomy 27-30). And all the people said, Amen. Thus was another safeguard placed around the Israelites and another effort made to train them in obedience, that they might enjoy the blessings of the Promised Land.

A special reason for this, which we are apt to forget, is that very few could read, and very few could have written copies of the law, even if they could read them. Some such method as the above was absolutely necessary in order to keep the law in the minds of the people, till they could settle down in peace and institute schools and regular Sabbath worship.

FOURTH. THE STORY OF THE STRATAGEM OF THE GIBEONITES.—Josh. 9: 3-27. Gibeon was an important city about six miles northwest of Jerusalem. Its inhabitants, fearing that Joshua's victorious army would destroy their city, disguised themselves with patched and worn-out shoes, old garments, mouldy provisions, pretending that they were emigrants from a far country, and asked Joshua to make a league or covenant with them. Hastily, the case was so clear, Joshua and the princes made a covenant of peace with them without consulting the Lord. They kept their oath in spite of the people, but made the Gibeonites hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Two lessons are taught us by this story. One is never to be so confident in our judgments, so sure that we see things on all sides, that we go forward in any undertaking without asking wisdom from God, "who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not." The other lesson teaches that in gaining the victory over our own souls sometimes worldly things present themselves in disguise; and that the only way to utilize them is by making them "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the kingdom of God in the soul. Many a thing, like fire, is useful as a servant, but dangerous and deadly as a master.

Fifth. The Battle from Gibeon to Bethhoron.—Joshua 10. Five kings united to attack Gibeon, perhaps indignant at its alliance with Israel. Joshua, by a long night-march from Gilgal, made a sudden attack, and drove the enemy up the hills toward Bethhoron.

Two providential events aided Joshua.

The first was a tremendous hailstorm, with thunder and lightning, according to Josephus, which destroyed many of the enemy. "By a very similar mischance the Austrians were overtaken in 1859 at the Battle of Solferino." Even ordinary hailstones in Syria are often of enormous size. "During a storm at Constantinople in 1831, many of the hailstones, or rather masses of ice, weighed from half a pound to above a pound. Under this tremendous fall the roofs of houses were beaten in, trees were stripped of their leaves and branches, many persons who could not soon enough find shelter were killed, animals were slain, and limbs were broken. In fact, none who know the tremendous power which the hailstones of the East sometimes exhibit will question, as some have questioned, the possibility that any hail could produce the effect described."—*Kitto's Bible Illustrations*, II., p. 293.

Commodore Porter describes this same hailstorm, or a similar one the same year, while he was crossing the Bosphorus. "Some of the pieces of ice picked up were over a pound in weight, and many three-quarters of a pound."

The second event is one which the author of Joshua quotes from the *Book of Jasher*, alluded to in 2 Sam. 1: 18. Joshua, when he saw that there was not time to complete the victory before darkness came, prayed to the Lord with such faith that he dared before all the people to say:

"Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon,
And thou, Moon, in the Valley of Ajalon."

The story as told here implies some providential miracle. Some think that there was some atmospheric refraction of light that kept the appearance and the light of the sun above the horizon after the sun had set; something as occurred in the setting back of the shadow upon the dial of Ahaz (Isa. 38: 8).

Many modern scholars think it to be a poetical expression, like *the stars fighting* against Sisera (Judg. 5: 20), *the melting down* of the mountains (Isa. 34: 3; Mic. 1: 4), *the skipping of Lebanon* (Psa. 29: 6), *the rending of the heavens* (Isa. 64: 1), as if he said, "May the sun of Israel never go down."

So Shakespeare in *King John* (Act III., Scene 1) makes the king of France speak concerning a royal marriage:

"To solemnize this day, the glorious Sun
Stays in his course and plays the alchemist,
Turning with splendor of his precious eye
The meager, cloddy earth to glittering gold."

6. Then the children of Jū'dah ^{came} ^{drew nigh} unto Jōsh'u-a in Gīl'gāl: and Cā'leb the son of Je-phūn'neh the ¹Ken'ez-ite ^{Ken'iz-zite} said unto him, Thou knowest ²the thing that the LORD ^{said} ^{spake} unto Mō'ses the man of God concerning me and thee ³in Kā'desh-bar'ne-a.

7. Forty years old ^{concerning} ^{was} I when Mō'ses the servant of the LORD ⁴sent me from Kā'desh-bar'ne-a to ^{espied} ^{spy} out the land; and I brought him word again as ^{it was} ^{it was} in mine heart.

¹ Num. 32: 12; Josh. 15: 17.
² Num. 14: 24, 30; Deut. 1: 36.

³ Num. 13: 26.
⁴ Num. 13: 6.



From Assyrian Monuments.

A King with His Foot on the Neck of an Enemy.

II. Caleb. His Character and Career. — Vs. 6-11.

11. DIVISION OF THE LAND. 6. Came unto Joshua in Gilgal.

At the close of five or six years' war, the land was so far subdued that it could be divided among the nine and one-half tribes who settled west of the Jordan, the other two and one-half tribes having al-

ready received their portion on the east of the Jordan. It was assigned by lot at a great assembly at Gilgal. Each family had its farm with an absolute title. It could be alienated for a time, but at the end of every 50 years there was to be a restoration to each family of the family portion. This did not include city property. Thus perpetual poverty was excluded from the family; yet each person suffered for neglect and idleness, and was rewarded for diligence.

CALEB. FAMILY ORIGIN. Caleb . . . the Kenezite, the descendant of Kenaz, the son of Esau. "The probabilities are that Caleb, or his father, became members of the tribe of Judah by adoption" (*Professor Beecher*), like Hobab, Ruth, and Heber. "The faith of this family was preeminently the fruit of conviction, and not the accident of heredity. It had a firmer basis than that of most Israelites. It was woven more closely into the texture of their being, and swayed their lives more powerfully. It is pleasing to think that there may have been many such proselytes; that the promise to Abraham may have attracted souls from the east, and the west, and the north, and the south" (a foretaste of the glorious fulfilment yet to come). — *Blaikie in Expositor's Bible*.

He was born while the Israelites were still in slavery in Egypt, for he was **forty years old . . . when Moses . . . sent him from Kadesh-barnea to espied out the land** (v. 7).

HIS CHARACTER. 1. Caleb was a great and marked man, but what is often called "a self-made man"; rather, a God-made man. Coming from without the nation, he became a prince and a power in the nation because of his faith in God and utilization of all that God had given him.

2. Mr. Tuck in his *Revelation by Character* represents Caleb as "quite an ordinary man . . . no genius," but the message of his life was that "he did commonplace things in an uncommon spirit. The uncommon thing about Caleb was precisely this — his religion was thorough . . . he wholly followed the LORD (v. 8)."

3. On the other hand, Matheson in *Representative Men* calls Caleb a leader and explorer, "capable of Pisgah glimpses," his life pitched upon a hill; he could see things afar off; he was the real hero of the exploring expedition. "Was faith to drop her wings at the very gate of Paradise! Was trust to become bankrupt within sight of the city of gold!" Never in Caleb's thought.

8. Nevertheless ¹ my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I wholly ² followed the LORD my God.

9. And Mō'ses sware on that day, saying, ³ Surely the land ⁴ whereon thy ^{feet have} trodden shall be ^{thine} inheritance ^{and thy children's} for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God.

10. And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, ⁵ as he ^{said,} ^{spake,} these forty and five years, ^{even since} the LORD spake this word unto Mō'ses, while ^{the children of} Is'ra-el ^{wandered} in the wilderness: and now, lo, I ^{am} this day fourscore and five years old.

11. ⁶ As yet I ^{am} ^{as} strong this day as ^{I was} ^{I was} in the day that Mō'ses sent me: as my strength ^{was} then, even so ^{is} ^{is} my strength now, for war, ^{both} ^{and} ⁷ to go out and to come in.

¹ Num. 13: 31, 32.

² Num. 14: 24.

³ Num. 14: 23, 24; Josh. 1: 3.

⁴ Num. 13: 22.

⁵ Num. 14: 30.

⁶ Deut. 34: 7.

⁷ Deut. 31: 2.

4. But FAITH AND FAITHFULNESS were the living heart of Caleb's character. He was sincere to the core. His faith endured 45 years without fading or faltering. "Caleb is one of those men whom we meet with seldom in Bible history, but whenever we do meet them we are the better for the meeting. Bright and brave, strong, modest, and cheerful, there is honesty in his face, courage and decision in the very pose of his body, and the calm confidence of faith in his very look and attitude. . . . That beautiful creation of Milton's, the Seraph Abdiel, 'faithful found among the faithless, faithful only he,' is the type and ideal of the class." So Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Peter, Paul, and many a later Christian hero. With Paul he could say, "I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith."

5. Caleb met opposition with courage and faith, when **my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt** (v. 8). They could stone him, but, like the prophets of old, he never wavered.

ILLUSTRATION. Governor Seymour, of New York, once said in an address that if God should give him permission to live his life over again, and put in the new life whatever he chose from the old life, he might leave out some of his pleasures, but he would not dare to leave out one trial, or difficulty, or hard place.

6. Caleb was of a thankful disposition, full of cheer. He did not dwell on his desert trials, or the 45 years' delay, or the opposition of his brethren, or his failure to change their minds; but on what God had done for him on the promises, on his long and healthy life of usefulness, so that even at 85 he could say with Xavier in his dream realized in his life, "And yet more, O Lord, yet more."

10. **The LORD hath kept me alive.** As he promised. One promise fulfilled gave the assurance that the other would be. But Caleb's clean, active life was one of the means to this healthful old age. Maclaren in the *Sunday School Times* warns the young thus:

"The old man of eighty-five is vigorous and hale as when he tramped through the land nearly half a century ago. The life that is dictated by Christian principle directly contributes to physical health and longevity. Insurance offices find that clergymen live longer than the average. Here in England some offices have separate tables for total abstainers, whom they insure at a lower rate than others. It is true still that sinners do "not live out half their days." In our great cities every year numbers of lads from the country, who have been "going the pace," have to drop out of the race. . . . If we would have old age vigorous, let us keep youth clean."

11. **Yet I am as strong this day as I was.** Spoken to give assurance that he could take possession of the land.

THE GREAT-HEART OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. "It may be that Jehovah will be with me, and I shall drive them out" (v. 12). President Roosevelt is a deep student of religious literature, and Bunyan is one of his favorite authors. It is reported that a reply he made to a distinguished literary woman, who was not so well grounded in the faith of the fathers as might have been expected, hurried her in some chagrin the next day to her book shelves.

"Tell me, Mr. President," she is said to have asked, "what character in fiction comes nearest to your ideal of what a man should be?"

12. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how ¹the ^{An'a-kims were} there, and ^{that the} cities ^{were} great ^{and} fenced: ²if so be the LORD will ^{be} it may be that the LORD will be with me, then ³I shall ^{be able to} drive them out, as the LORD ^{said,} spake.

13. And Jōsh'u-a ⁴blessed him; ⁵and he gave ^{He'bron} unto Cā'leb the son of Je-phūn'neh ^{He'bron} for an inheritance.

14. ⁶He'bron therefore ^{Therefore He'bron} became the inheritance of Cā'leb the son of Je-phūn'neh the ^{Ken'ez-ite} unto this day; because that he ^{Ken'iz-zite,} ⁷wholly followed the LORD, the God of Is'ra-el.

15. ⁸the name of He'bron ^{before was Kir'jath-ar'ba; beforetime was Kir'i-ath-ar'ba; which Ar'ba was} And ^{the} Now ^{a great} the greatest man among the ^{An'a-kims.} ^{An'a-kim.} ⁹And the land had rest from war.

¹ Num. 13 : 28, 33.

² Psa. 18 : 32 ; Rom. 8 : 31.

³ Josh. 15 : 14 ; Judg. 1 : 20.

⁴ Josh. 22 : 6.

⁵ Josh. 10 : 37 ; 21 : 11.

⁶ Josh. 21 : 12.

⁷ Vs. 8, 9.

⁸ Gen. 23 : 2 ; Josh. 15 : 13.

⁹ Josh. 11 : 23.

"Great-heart," replied the President. "In my estimation he is the loftiest figure living and moving in letters."

"I am afraid I am not so well up in modern fiction as I thought I was," ventured the lady.

Mr. Roosevelt's good-natured laughter told her she was on sinking sand. "How stupid of me!" she hurried to say. "One of the old pagan heroes, of course, whom I have forgotten. Where shall I find him?"

"In the Delectable Mountains," laughed the President, turning to other guests pressing for recognition. Caleb is the Great-heart of the Old Testament story. — *Louis Albert Banks.*

III. Caleb's Inheritance. — Vs. 12-15. 12. Now therefore give me this mountain: not a particular mountain, but the mountainous region in which Hebron was situated. "Hebron is the highest city of Southern Palestine, being 600 feet higher than Jerusalem, and 2,600 feet above the Mediterranean." — *Johnson.* The Anakims (a race of giants) were there, and . . . the cities were great and fenced: fortified with strong walls. These things, an expression of his good wishes, and prayer for the success of his undertaking. — *Lange.* Hebron for an inheritance. Many historical associations clustered about this place, and gave added interest to its possession.

14. Unto this day. When the book was written, or revised by some later hand.

15. The name of Hebron before was Kirjath-arba. That is, "the city of Arba." A great man (R. V.; "the greatest man") among the Anakims.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. THE WHOLE WORLD IS TO BE CONQUERED FOR CHRIST. Not an enemy is to be left. But it is to be conquered by spiritual, not carnal weapons, and by the wonderful power of the Holy Spirit. The victory does not destroy men, but sins and crimes and bad customs and wicked feelings, transforming and blessing the people by the conquest.

"The life-long battle with all evil things
Is the war of giants and of kings."

"To prevent this (petrification) only one specific is known to man, and that is to be

constantly in campaign against the evils of the world. One of the great uses of the devil is to keep the church from the lethargy that ends in death." — *William H. Stead*.

2. "ANAKIM" IN OUR INHERITANCE. Some of the highest blessings are fenced about with the greatest difficulties. (1) No earthly inheritance is without its peculiar disadvantages. Some of the "Anakim" which resist us in our efforts to fulfil our mission are: (a) the evil in our own heart, *e. g.*, indolence, fear, earthliness; (b) the temptations of the world, arising from bad examples, customs, distracting pleasures; (c) direct hindrance in persecution and opposition, growing out of the world's ignorance, prejudice, envy, etc. (2) Nevertheless it is best for us, as it was for Caleb, to have such an inheritance. Difficulties (a) try our faith and courage; (b) give scope for energy and devotion; (c) make the ultimate peace the more blessed. — *Adeny*. (3) People sometimes think of their inheritance in the religion of Christ as one of mere peace and happiness; and forget that the cross is there, and self-denial, and hard fighting against sin, and hard duties to perform. It is to be won, every inch of it, with marvelous divine help, but also by hard battles and persevering courage. Sin has no right there, and we must drive it out in all its forms.

3. THE EFFECT OF THE ANAKIM ON SOME. There are those who hesitate on this account to take possession of their Promised Land. "Let us suppose," says Matheson, "that twelve men were divinely selected to have a preliminary vision of the Christian heaven with the object of reporting its nature to their fellow-men, the selection being made without reference to spirituality, and wholly on the ground of investigative powers. . . . It is almost certain that at the sight of the Christian heaven ten of the company would start back in dismay — not appalled by the difficulty, but appalled by the facility of getting in. For they would see there the last thing they expected to see, — a life of sacrifice at the center. Whatever grapes of Eshcol they might behold, whatever gates of pearl they might gaze on, whatever streets of gold they might survey, they would always recognize behind these objects the presence of that form which they had regarded as the symbol of misery, — the Cross."

In the same line of thought J. R. Miller writes: "There are those who sigh for holiness and beauty of character, but they are not willing to pay the price. They sing, 'More holiness give me,' and dream of some lofty spiritual attainment, some transfiguration, but they are not willing to endure the toils, fight the battles, and make the self-sacrifices necessary to win these celestial heights. They want a larger spiritual inheritance, but they have no thought of taking it in primeval forests which their own hands must cut down."

4. Many of the best promises are realized only in the course of time. Some things cannot be done in a moment. But with continued faithfulness the fulfilment is sure to come.

"If only we strive to be pure and true,
To each of us there will come an hour
When the tree of life shall burst into flower,

And rain at our feet the glorious dower
Of something grander than ever we knew."

ILLUSTRATION. In the charming little booklet, *Expectation Corner*, Adam Slowman was led into the Lord's treasure houses, and among many other wonders there revealed to him was the *Delayed Blessings Office*, where God kept certain things prayed for until the wise time came to send them. "It takes a long time for some pensioners to learn that *delays are not denials*. . . . Ah, there are secrets of love and wisdom in the 'Delayed Blessings Department' which are little dreamt of. Men would pluck their mercies green when the Lord would have them ripe." "Therefore the Lord will WAIT, that he may be gracious unto you" (Isa. 30: 18).

5. Faithfulness in early life reaps a large reward in later years. There is no greater mistake than to imagine that indolence, carelessness, "wild oats" in youth can lead to a successful life. "Whatsoever a man soweth THAT shall he also reap."

6. "The chief reward of Caleb did not consist in his getting possession, just before he died, of a tract of rough land, but in the consciousness of integrity, the delight of achievement, the esteem of his comrades, the approval of God." — *Professor Beecher*.

ILLUSTRATION. Some one said to a wicked man, "You do not look as if you had prospered by your wickedness." "I have not," he replied. "I have met with all manner of misfortunes. I have twice been in state's prison; but I tell you, my worst punishment is in *being what I am*." So, on the other hand, the greatest reward of goodness is not an angel's harp or crown, or to walk the golden streets, but to be like an angel, to have the heavenly character.

LESSON V. — November 3.

THE CITIES OF REFUGE. — Joshua 20: 1-9.

READ Numbers 35: 6-34. COMMIT vs. 2, 3.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *My refuge is in God.* — PSA. 62: 7.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Compare the passages referring to the cities of refuge and their purpose (Ex. 21: 12-14; Num. 35: 6, 9-34; Deut. 4: 41-43; 19: 1-13; and Josh. 20: 1-9). From these make a résumé of the whole subject in its different parts and relations.

Search out all the passages which refer to sin and its punishment as like an avenger; and all those which show that God is our refuge, and how we may avail ourselves of it.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

A prominent preacher writes: "One evening a good old saint gave me a word of counsel, the influence of which remains with me to this hour: 'Whenever thou hast to preach ask thyself three questions — "What am I going to say? How am I going to say it? Why am I going to say it?"' Such was the effect of this wholesome advice that I rarely enter a pulpit without trying to remember that it is necessary to have 'something' to say, to express that 'something' in the most effective way possible to me, and to hide myself behind the message, and to draw attention to Him who is God's one answer to all human need. . . . That which has dominated my life, shaped my studies, and illumined my future was the passionate desire to be an ambassador of Jesus Christ."

This is the teacher's work, and in this lesson the teacher can use the old law of Israel as an illustration of the need of a refuge, and the fact of a refuge, and how to make use of the refuge in the everlasting arms of our Father's love revealed in Jesus Christ.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — The latter part of Joshua's life. It is uncertain how long he lived. Josephus says that his administration lasted twenty-five years.

Place. — The administration capital seems to have been transferred from the military headquarters at Gilgal to the religious center at Shiloh, a town ten miles north-north-east of Bethel. (Josh. 18: 1; 19: 51; 21: 2.)

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Jesus, lover of my soul."
"God is the refuge of his saints."

LEARN BY HEART.

Matt. 11: 28-30; Rom. 8: 1; Psal. 32: 1, 2, 5.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Bennett's "Joshua" in Haupt's *Sacred Books of the Old Testament* "contains many curious remarks." *Commentaries on Numbers and Joshua.* Perhaps the record of what our English ancestors did in the direction of this lesson will bring the subject closer home than most books on the subject. See Green's *Short History of the English People*, and his *Making of England*; "Goel" in *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*; Bissell's *Laws of Asylum in Israel*. Dr. Trumbull's *Blood Covenant*, pp. 258-263, and Appendix on blood-ransoming, give an interesting account of the Goel, or blood avenger; so also does Bush's *Illustrations of Scripture*, pp. 99-102. Livingstone and Stanley on several occasions made payments, or had them made, to avoid a conflict on a question of blood; see *Travels in South Africa*, pp. 368-370, 390, 482; *The Congo, I.*, pp. 520-527. Spurgeon's *Sermons*, series 3, "The Sinner's Refuge," is very effective.

LITERARY REFERENCES.

For illustrations of conscience, see Æschylus' *Tragedy of Orestes*; Scott's *Marmion*; Shakespeare's *Richard III.* and *Macbeth*; Hood's *Poems*, "Dream of Eugene Aram"; Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. Henry Drummond's *The Programme of Christianity* shows how the very nature of things is the avenger. Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse*, "The bosom serpent," and Hood's "Eugene Aram." The poem, "I sat alone with my conscience."

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The Avenger and the Refuge.

I. THE BACKGROUND OF ANCIENT CUSTOM.

The murderer must be punished.
The custom of blood revenge.
Four dangers in this custom.

II. THE AVENGER OF BLOOD.

III. THE CITIES OF REFUGE AND THEIR COURTS (vs. 1-9).

A just discrimination (vs. 1-3).
The right of asylum.
The preliminary trial (v. 4).
The right to a competent court trial (vs. 5, 6, 9).
If found guilty of wilful murder.
The punishment of the less guilty.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Have I sinned against God?
Have I repented and gone to God for forgiveness?
Have I found his forgiving love?

HOME WORK
AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The avenger of blood in olden time.
The right of asylum.
The justice of the death punishment for murder.
The safeguards against injustice.
The distinction between wilful crimes and unintentional wrongs.
Apply this principle to the wrong-doings of children, and to those who injure us.
The avengers of sin.
How Christ is our Refuge.

1. The Background of Ancient Custom. — In order to understand the ordinances concerning the Cities of Refuge which are referred to in four of the first six books of the Bible, it is necessary to realize two great facts.

FIRST. That there are some crimes that must be removed if a nation would exist and prosper. Such are treason, which strikes at the life of the nation, and murder, which strikes at the existence of the family as well as of the individual. Breaking the sixth commandment wrongs not merely the individual. It is a threefold crime: 1. Against the individual. It takes away his most precious possession; everything so far as this world is concerned.

2. Against the family and the nation, for it takes away a member, often the support, of the family, and one of the essential members and defenders of the nation.

3. Against God, the giver of life.

Hence the severest punishment possible is meted out to whoever perpetrates this crime, and ought to be, in order to prevent as many as possible from committing the crime. No other punishment is adequate. We pity the murderer for his suffering. We ought to have still more pity for the innocent victims. Murder would be almost entirely extirpated from the list of crimes if every wilful murderer was immediately punished.

SECOND. In the early days when nations were small and weak, when there were multitudes of small semi-independent tribes, there was no general government to enforce the law and exact justice when the men of one tribe committed a crime against another. Hence there grew up the custom of blood revenge, according to which the tribes, or the relatives of the murdered person, were compelled themselves to punish the murderer, who was naturally, in most cases, the member of another tribe. There was no one else to do it. It was very much like lynch law, where the people feel the need of punishment for safety's sake, and fear the delays of the usual processes of criminal law. "With the advance of civilization and the gradual evolution of the State, the duty of safeguarding the rights of the community passes to the State."

"The Semitic peoples have practised this custom (of blood revenge) from prehistoric times." — *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*.

HISTORICAL EXAMPLES. Similar customs obtain in Persia, Abyssinia, and among the Druses and Circassians, as also they obtained among the Hindus and the ancient Germans and Anglo-Saxons, our English ancestors. "Under the Eastern idea of the responsibility of a whole family or clan for the act of any of its members, the Arab avenger hesitates not to slay the kinsman of the murderer. Hence have arisen those blood-feuds which are the curse of Arabia, and which, in Europe, still linger in the vendetta of Corsica and Sicily." — *Canon Tristram*.

"In Australia, for example, for the nearest relative of a murdered man to refuse to avenge his death would be to repudiate a most sacred obligation, and at the same time to incur the taunts and derision of the entire clan." — *Professor Driver, of Oxford, in Encyclopedia Biblica*.

THIRD. FOUR DANGERS IN THIS PLAN. 1. There was the danger of making it an instrument of private revenge.

1. The LORD also ^{And the LORD} spake unto Jōsh'u-a, saying,
2. Speak to the children of Is'ra-el, saying, ^{1 Appoint out for you Assign you the} cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Mo'ses:
3. ^{That the slayer that the manslayer} that killeth ^{any any} person ^{unawares and unwittingly unwittingly and unawares} may flee thither: and they shall be ^{your your} unto you for a refuge from the avenger of blood.

1 Ex. 21: 13; Num. 35: 6, 11, 14; Deut. 19: 2, 9.

2. There was danger of long, bloody feuds, revenges, continued enmity, and almost extermination. "Among the Arab tribes of the present day 'any bloodshed whatever, whether wilful or accidental, laid the homicide open to the *duteous* revenge of the relatives and family of the slain person, who again in their turn were then similarly watched and hunted by the opposite party, until a family war of extermination had legally settled itself from generation to generation, without the least prospect of a peaceful termination.' " — *Cambridge Bible*.

3. There was danger of great injustice by not making a distinction between criminality and carelessness; between deliberate murder and accidental homicide.

4. There arose the danger of the escape of those who had money, so that justice was frustrated by riches, and the poor had not an equal chance. "All through the East there are regular fixed tariffs for blood canceling. Throughout Arabia and Syria, and in various parts of Africa, the first question to be considered in any case of unlawful blood shedding is whether the loss of life shall be restored or balanced by blood or by some equivalent of blood. Though it is true, still, in some instances all money payment for blood is refused; but the avowed motive in such a case is the holding of life as above price — the very idea which the Mosaic Law emphasized. Thus Burton tells of the excited Bedaween mother who dashes the proffered blood-money to the ground, swearing by Allah that she will not eat her son's blood." — *H. C. Trumbull in Pilgrimage to Mecca*.

II. **The Avenger of Blood.** — The Hebrews had inherited the custom of blood revenge. For many years under Joshua and the Judges there was but a very simple general government, and to a large extent "every man did what was right in his own eyes." The custom of blood revenge must wisely remain; but it must be guarded against the evils that frequently became attached to the system, and must become a training of the people for a better system.

THE GOEL was the one appointed to do this work. In vs. 3, 4, 5, 9 this Hebrew word is translated "avenger of blood," and in Ruth "kinsman," next of kin, because it was the duty of the next of kin to perform the duties of the *goel*. He is really THE VINDICATOR, one "whose duty it was to secure justice to the injured," "to restore the violated family integrity," one "who is authorized to obtain blood for blood as an act of justice," "the balancing of a blood account." In civil cases the *goel* was the one to redeem property which his brother had sold, or the person of his brother who had been sold into slavery for debt. Compare the case of Ruth and Boaz, and the purchase of property by Jeremiah (Jer. 32: 8-12). In criminal law the *goel*, "the next of kin, had laid upon him the duty of enforcing the claim for satisfaction of a murdered kinsman." His duty was justice rather than revenge. "In the case of loss of life he had the responsibility of securing to the family an equivalent of that loss, by other blood, or by an agreed payment for its value." See Trumbull's *Blood Covenant*, pp. 259-263, and *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, art. "Goel."

III. **The Cities of Refuge, and Their Courts.** — Vs. 1-9. There was a scheme for overcoming the dangers of blood revenge, and dealing out exact and merciful justice to all, and saving the innocent, or partially innocent, from indiscriminate injustice.

FIRST. A JUST DISCRIMINATION. — Vs. 1-3. 2. **Appoint out for you.** R. v., "Assign you the" cities of refuge, the law for which had been given through Moses, but which could not be selected till the Israelites had settled down in their new home. See Num. 35: 9-34; Deut. 19: 1-3, where may be found a more detailed account of the object of these cities.

The first object of the appointment of these cities was to prevent the injustice of an indiscriminate execution of all who came under the ban of the avengers of blood. The cities were to protect only those who killed (v. 3) **any person unawares and unwittingly**. Literally, "by error, without knowing," by some mistake of judgment, or accidental blow, without intending to injure. **They shall be your refuge**, the refuge for all the nation. Not only did the slayer need protection, but the nation needed to be defended from violence

and crime, and from doing wrong to persons who were not at heart guilty of crime. It is worse to commit a crime than to suffer from it.

Instances as to whom the law should apply are given, — slaying another, not seeking his harm (Num. 35: 23); when no dangerous weapon, indicating design to injure, was used (Num. 35: 16, 17, 18, compare vs. 22-24); accident (Ex. 21: 13); sudden collision (Num. 35: 22); something thrown upon a man without seeing him (Num. 35: 23), as an ax head slipping from its handle (Deut. 19: 5).

SECOND. THE RIGHT OF ASYLUM. — Vs. 4, 7, 8. The necessity for some inviolable place of refuge has been recognized in the lawless ages of the past. These refuges have usually been religious places, as groves, altars, and temples. These have been the safest, because to attack them was to defy the gods to whom they were dedicated, and to array against the invaders the unseen forces supposed to be at their command.

These places were so carefully guarded that not even a bird could be molested in these sacred precincts.

Herodotus says that when Aristodikus disturbed the birds' nests in the temple at Cumæ, and took the young from them, a voice spoke out from the interior of the temple, "Most villainous of men! how darest thou do such a thing as to drive away such as seek refuge in my temple." And the Athenians were so enraged at Atarbes for killing a sparrow which had built a nest in the temple of Esculapius that they killed him. It is said that the Arabs never disturb the birds which build their nests in the temple at Mecca.

"Among the Greeks and Romans the number of these places became in process of time very great, and led, by abuse, to a fresh increase of criminals." — *J. R. Beard*. "The mediæval church recognized the same necessity in a similar state of society, and granted what is known as the right of 'sanctuary' to many of the most sacred shrines in every country in Europe. Practically, the right of sanctuary was claimed for any accused person who succeeded in reaching the altar of a church. Canterbury and Durham were two of the most celebrated sanctuaries in England, as containing the shrines of St. Thomas à Becket and St. Cuthbert. On the chief door of Durham Cathedral still remains the great bronze knocker, which, if any fugitive should touch, he was entitled to protection and maintenance for thirty-seven days, until his case could be investigated. This right of sanctuary, before the Reformation, had become much abused." — *Canon Tristram*.

This right of asylum was needed among the Jews in their early history, and was adopted, but, as we shall see, with safeguards against the abuses and evil consequences which arose elsewhere.

"There were six cities appointed for this purpose, three on either side of the Jordan, almost equally remote from each other.

ON THE WEST.

ON THE EAST.

1. **Kedesh**, in Naphtali, in the north.
2. **Shechem**, in Mt. Ephraim, in the center.
3. **Hebron**, in Judah, in the south.

1. **Golan**, in Bashan, north.
2. **Ramoth-Gilead**, in Gad, center.
3. **Bezer**, in Reuben, south.

"It requires only to look at the map to see how wisely these spots were marked out, so as to make a city of refuge easy of access from all parts of the land. They were chosen, it will be observed, out of the priestly and Levitical cities, as likely to be inhabited by the most intelligent part of the community." — *Cambridge Bible*.

NOTE. Not only was the situation of these cities such as to present the easiest access from all parts of the country, but roads were to be built to them (Deut. 19: 3). "According to the Rabbins, in order to give the fugitive all possible advantage in his flight, it was the business of the Sanhedrim to make the roads that led to the cities of refuge convenient, by enlarging them and removing every obstruction that might hurt his foot or hinder his speed. No hillock was left, no river was allowed over which there was not a bridge. At every turning there were to be posts erected bearing the words, *Refuge, Refuge*, to guide the unhappy man in his flight, and two students in the law were appointed to accompany him, that, if the avenger should overtake him before he reached the city, they might attempt to pacify him till the legal investigation could take place." — *J. R. Beard*.

If any one refused to go his blood was on his own head.

THIRD. THE PRELIMINARY, OR GRAND JURY TRIAL. V. 4. **Shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city**, *i. e.*, not outside of the gate of the city, but in the forum, or public square, which was near the city gates, and used as a place for public meetings and trials (compare Ruth 4: 1, 2). "Whoever reaches one of these cities is

4. And ^{when he that doth he shall} flee unto one of those cities, ^{and} shall stand at the entering of ¹ the gate of the city, and ^{shall} declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city; ^{and} they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.

5. ² And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver ^{the slayer up} into his hand; because he smote his neighbour ^{unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime.}

6. And he shall dwell in that city, ³ until he stand before the congregation for ^{judgment, and judgment,} until the death of the high priest that shall be in those ⁴ days: then shall the ^{slayer manslayer} return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

¹ Ruth 4: 1, 2.² Num. 35: 12.³ Num. 35: 12, 25.

entitled to trial. So says this verse and Num. 35: 12, 24. Many details are given, and it is instructive to study them. The mode of procedure was very enlightened, even when tested by the highest standards that men have yet reached. . . . This amounts to his giving himself up, and standing committed for trial." — *Professor Beecher*. **Shall declare his cause**, state his case, declare what he has done and why he has had to flee from home. It was uncertain whether he was a criminal, or one who had a right to claim asylum from his pursuers. In either case **they**, the elders, the rulers, **shall take him into the city**, receive him, care for him, and assign him a dwelling-place, as he probably left home suddenly, without preparation for a prolonged stay. If no accuser came, he was safe as long as he remained in the city.

FOURTH. THE RIGHT TO A REGULAR TRIAL BEFORE A COMPETENT COURT. — Vs. 5, 6, 9. **5. If the avenger of blood pursue after him**, as it was his duty to do if he believed the man to be a murderer, **they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand, because** on the face of it **he smote his neighbour unwittingly**, and should have a fair trial before the avenger of blood could punish him.

6. Until he stand. "The judges and elders of the people, in trying civil and criminal causes, always sat; the person who came for judgment, or who was tried, always stood." — *Bush*. **Before the congregation.** The rulers and representatives of the city, who are frequently spoken of as if they were the body of the people (compare Josh. 24: 1 and 24: 2, 19, 21). **For judgment**, for a just trial and decision. "Much stress is laid on the previous conduct of the slayer, and the relations between him and his victim, whether he lay in wait for the slain man (Deut. 19: 11), whether he 'hunted' for him or not (Ex. 21: 13; Num. 35: 20, 22), whether he smote him 'in secret' (Deut. 27: 24). Was the deed presumptuous,—that is to say, malicious? (Ex. 21: 14.) Was it with guile? (Ex. 21: 14.) Especially, was there enmity previously between the two men? (Num. 35: 21, 22.) Was there hatred of the slain on the part of the slayer? (Num. 35: 20, 23; Deut. 19: 4, 6, 11; Josh. 20: 5.) The fact that so many particulars are enumerated shows that the trial contemplated was to be a careful one." — *Professor Beecher* in *Sunday School Times*.

A strong bar against the license of private revenge was placed by the provision which required the concurrence of at least two witnesses in any capital question (Num. 35: 30; Deut. 17: 6-8; 19: 15). Witnesses were restrained from falsehood by the just requirement that they should be punished, if guilty of perjury, by the same punishment which would have fallen, had their testimony proved acceptable, upon the person against whom they testified (Deut. 19: 16-21).

FIFTH. IF FOUND NOT GUILTY OF WILFUL MURDER, the fugitive was safe, but only so long as he remained in the city and its suburbs (Num. 35: 26-28).

He must remain here, away from his home and business, till the death of the high priest. This seeming hardship was necessary and just, because there is usually some fault of passion or carelessness in even accidental murders, and this great inconvenience would tend to carelessness and safety. There is often real guilt in carelessness, and innocent persons should be protected from its effects.

Here was an indeterminate sentence; an instance of releasing on probation; and a mode of justice which vies with the most modern theories of the treatment of criminals.

SIXTH. THE PUNISHMENT OF THE LESS GUILTY. All this did not save the guilty

7. And they ^{appointed set apart} ¹Kē'desh in Gāl'i-lēe in ^{the hill country of} Nāph'ta-li, and ²Shē'chem in ^{the hill country of} E'phrā-īm, and ³Kir'jath-ar'ba, which is He'bron, Kir'ath-ar'ba (the same is He'bron) in ⁴the ^{mountain hill country} of Jū'dah.

8. And ^{on the other side beyond the} Jor'dan ^{by at} Jēr'i-chō eastward, they assigned ⁵Bē'zer in the wilderness ^{upon in} the plain out of the tribe of Reu'ben, and ⁶Rā'moth in Gil'e-ād out of the tribe of Gād, and ⁷Gō'lan in Bā'shān out of the tribe of Ma-nās'seh.

9. ⁸These were the ^{cities appointed appointed cities} for all the children of Is'ra-el, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth ^{any} person ^{at unawares unwittingly} might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, ⁹until he stood before the congregation.

¹ Josh. 21 : 32 ; 1 Chron. 6 : 76.

² Josh. 21 : 21 ; 2 Chron. 10 : 1.

³ Josh. 14 : 15 ; 21 : 11, 13.

⁴ Luke 1 : 39.

⁵ Deut. 4 : 43 ; Josh. 21 : 36 ; 1 Chron. 6 : 78.

⁶ Josh. 21 : 38.

⁷ Josh. 21 : 27.

⁸ Num. 35 : 15.

⁹ V. 6.

from just punishment (Num. 35: 16-21). There was no opportunity for the Cities of Refuge to become hot-beds of crime and breeders of criminals. Unpunished crime is, equally with injustice, the means of increasing crime and the danger that threatens our country. Especially is there danger from that injustice which enables any one to escape the penalty by a money payment, and permits a rich criminal to pay a fine where the poor criminal must go to jail.

With the Jews no money, as among Bedouins and Arabs, and as allowed by the Romans, could buy off the wilful murderer (Num. 35: 31, 32). Thus the Jewish law showed a just regard for human life, and put the poor on the same footing as the rich. So Massachusetts, at the time of this writing, has spent \$35,000 to give a fair trial to one of the poorest and most vicious of its citizens.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. THE AVENGER OF SIN. That sin shall be punished is taught everywhere both in the Old Testament and the New. History is full of it. Literature is full of it.

Compare Lady Macbeth walking in her sleep. "All the perfumes of Arabia cannot sweeten this little hand." Shakespeare represents Richard III. as seeing a vision in his sleep just before his last battle, in which appear the ghosts of those whom he had murdered. One by one they come, rehearse the crimes he had committed upon them, and cry, "Despair and die. Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow." Browning's *Pippa Passes*; Hawthorne's *Mosses from an Old Manse*, "The Bosom Serpent"; Stanley Hall's *A Study of Fears*.

"Who is the avenger? Law. What law? Criminal law, sanitary law, social law, natural law. . . . Wherever want stares, and vice reigns, and rags rot, there the avenger takes his stand. Delay him not. He is the messenger of Christ. The very nature of things is God's avenger." — *Professor Drummond in The Programme of Christianity*. Conscience, the law of God in the soul, is an avenger. All these are made clearer and truer by the statement of the work of the Goel, the avenger of blood, as given above. It is not revenge, but justice and righteousness, through punishment.

"Pain is, so far as I know, the only protest in the human constitution against something which is wrong. It is the one protestant movement in the body-politic of man's organism, the only thing which raises its voice against existing abuses. . . . It indicates danger on the line. Without it the danger would be equally great, but not equally remedial. It is the declaration that our health is bad, or, at the least, that something is required to perfect our constitution. Hunger is the protest of the physical nature against further abstinence; lassitude is the protest of the mental nature against further work. . . . It is the function of conscience to tell the mind what it is the function of headache to tell the body—that disease is not a normal thing, and therefore not a permanent thing. As long as disease lasts, physical or mental, it is desirable that pain should last. Disease without pain is disease without protest — hurrying down a steep place into the sea." — *George Matheson, D.D.*

2. At the same time God in all divine punishment makes a distinction between wilful sin against light and sins which are more or less unconsciously done. He regards the

environment, the training, the qualities one is born with, all the thousand influences which affect the guilt of the sinner. He says, "Woe unto you Pharisees," because they knew better, and did not realize they were such great sinners; but he did not say, Woe unto you publicans, for their circumstances were different, and they knew they were sinners.

3. CHRIST IS THE CITY OF REFUGE. "It is not the church, it is not the altar; it is Christ himself who is the one and only sacrifice for sin, and therefore the one and only hiding-place to which the sinner can repair. But there such a refuge is provided as will meet the case of sinners of every class, not excepting the wilful murderer himself, if he repents, and that refuge is the everlasting love of God revealed in Jesus Christ, crucified for our sins, and raised from the dead for our redemption.

Christ is the city of refuge because God has so appointed. To go to him involves repentance of sin, forsaking of sin, the choice of God and goodness as our portion, a new heart, and a new nature of love. It brings us within every heavenly power that can save from sin, every high motive, the presence of the Holy Spirit. Christ is not an arbitrary, but a necessary city of refuge from sin.

4. The wilful and deliberate sinner has no place in this refuge so long as he continues in that state of mind. He must be delivered to the avenger to lead him to repentance, or to punish him if he refuses to repent.

5. "God has done all he can to aid and draw men to Jesus. Now, beloved, I think this is a picture of the road to Christ Jesus. It is no roundabout road of the law; it is no obeying this, that, and the other; it is a straight road: 'Believe and live.' It is a road so hard that no self-righteous man can ever tread it; but it is a road so easy that every sinner who knows himself to be a sinner might by it find his way to Christ and heaven. And lest they should be mistaken, God has sent me and my brethren in the ministry to be like hand posts in the way, to point poor sinners to Jesus; and we desire ever to have on our lips the cry, 'Refuge, refuge, refuge.' Sinner, that is the way; walk therein, and be thou saved." — *Spurgeon*.

LESSON VI. — November 10.

JOSHUA RENEWING THE COVENANT WITH ISRAEL. — Joshua 24: 14-28.

READ Joshua 23, 24. COMMIT vs. 22-24.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Choose you this day whom ye will serve.* — JOSH. 24: 15.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Make a Fourfold Study of the Decisive Choice.

1. Biblical examples of those who have chosen aright, with the results. As Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Josiah, Daniel, Paul, and all the others.

2. Examples of those who have made a wrong life choice. As Adam, Lot, Balaam, Rehoboam, Ahab, Ananias.

3. Exhortations to a right choice.

4. Warnings against a wrong choice.

Compare the covenant on Mts. Ebal and Gerizim 25 years before: Josh. 8: 30-35; Deut. 27: 1-10; the covenant at Mt. Sinai: Ex. 19: 1-25; the covenant in the plains of Moab: Deut. 29: 1, including Deut. 27-30; Elijah at Carmel: 1 Kings 18: 19-39.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

There is something very touching, very worthy of earnest attention in the dying words of a great man of large experience and true piety, especially of a man who is

"A living, breathing Bible, — tables where Both Covenants at large engraven were."

To listen to such words is our pleasant task to-day. And the teacher should so

use these words as to lead each scholar now, to-day, this hour, to choose God as his God, Jesus as his Saviour, and the kingdom of heaven as his aim for himself and for the world.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 15, 23, 24; 1 Kings 18: 21; Matt. 6: 24.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Good illustrations are found in Abbott's *Cyrus the Great*, "The Two Feasts," and Prescott's *Conquest of Peru*, I: 263, on Pizarro's choice. Also an effective illustration of parting advice is found in Mrs. Sewall's *Ballads*, "Mother's Last Words." Some very strong words on the example of public men are found in Wendell Phillips' *Speeches*, "Idols"; and in Webster's Speech on "Bunker Hill Monument," concerning the training value of monuments. The tract *Which Side of the Line*; Lowell's *Poems*, "The Present Crisis."

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Choose you this day whom ye will serve.

I. THE TWO ADDRESSES OF JOSHUA (Joshua 23, 24).

II. THE MANIFESTO (vs. 1-13).

A summary of their past history.

III. JOSHUA'S CONFERENCE WITH THE PEOPLE (vs. 14-24).

JOSHUA urges the people to decide. He weighs the reasons.

THE PEOPLE assent.

JOSHUA urges more strongly.

THE PEOPLE reply still more earnestly.

JOSHUA bids them put their decision into action.

THE PEOPLE solemnly promise the third time.

IV. THE DOUBLE WITNESS (vs. 25-28).

The Covenant.

The Monument.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

AGELESS HYMN.

"Come, said Jesus' sacred voice."

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Will you now choose God as your God, and Jesus Christ as your Saviour and King?

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — Near the close of Joshua's life. According to our Bible margins, B. C. 1427, 25 years after crossing the Jordan, and 18 after our last lesson.

Professor Beecher thinks that the time since the crossing of Jordan was much briefer.

Place. — The religious capital was at Shiloh (Josh. 18: 1). The great assembly for renewing the covenant was at Shechem, between Mts. Ebal and Gerizim.

Joshua was nearly 110 years old, living at Timnath Serah, not far from Shechem.

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Comparison of this assembly with the other similar ones.

Joshua's review of his life.

What the Past could say to the Present.

Reasons for choosing God to serve and obey.

How they were to show their choice.

Witnesses against themselves.

Value of the Memorial Monument.

I. **The Two Addresses of Joshua.** — Joshua 23, 24. The conquest of the country took several years, not of uninterrupted warfare, but of wars intermingled with cultivating the fields and making homes and becoming citizens. Although the Canaanites were not wholly exterminated (Josh. 23: 12; Judg. 2: 2, 3), yet the war was practically ended, and the people gave themselves to the positive work of settling down as prosperous citizens of the Promised Land (Josh. 21: 43-45).

Joshua was drawing near to the close of a long and useful life of 110 years. He had been watching the tendencies of the times, and knew well the character of his people and the peculiar dangers to which they would be exposed. Therefore he determined to make, before he died, one more appeal to them, under the most solemn circumstances possible.

It is uncertain whether the last two chapters of Joshua are two different addresses or two reports of the same address. The only importance of the question is its bearing on the structure of the book.

The *Polychrome Bible*, the *Expositor's Bible*, and others regard them as two trustworthy reports of the Shechem address, given separately as the editor received them, and not interwoven according to the plan usually adopted.

Others regard them as two similar addresses on the same great occasion to different audiences, the first to a mass meeting of the people, and the second to the officers and judges of all the tribes assembled at Shechem, probably on the sloping sides of Mts. Ebal and Gerizim, where they had gathered 25 years before, on their first entrance into the Promised Land, and made the most solemn promises to God.

II. **The Manifesto.** — Vs. 1-13. No circumstances could be more impressive, as, amid these hallowed associations and memories, the white-haired, beloved leader, saintly in

14. ¹Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in ²sincerity and in truth: and ³put away the gods which your fathers served ^{on the} other side of the flood, ^{beyond} and ⁴in E'gypt; and serve ye the LORD.

15. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, ⁵choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether ⁶the gods which your fathers served that ^{were on the other side of the flood,} or ⁷the gods of the Am'or-ites, in whose land ^{were beyond the River,} ye dwell: ⁸but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

16. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods;

17. ^{For} the LORD our God, he ^{it is} that brought us ^{up} and our fathers ^{up} out of the land of E'gypt, from the house of bondage, and ^{which} ^{that} did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the ^{people} ^{peoples} through ^{the midst of} whom we passed:

¹ Deut. 10: 12.

² Gen. 17: 1; Psa. 119: 1; 2 Cor. 1: 12.

³ Vs. 2, 23; Lev. 17: 7.

⁴ Ezek. 20: 7.

⁵ Ruth 1: 15; John 6: 67.

⁶ V. 14.

⁷ Ex. 23: 24; Deut. 13: 7.

⁸ Gen. 18: 19.

character, and touched with the light of a near eternity, arose and made his dying appeal, somewhat as the Apostle John, when very old, went feebly about among the disciples, saying continually, "Little children, love one another." In this place all the assembled multitudes could see and hear him. For the air is so clear that a "single voice can be heard by many thousands." The longest recorded distance at which a man's voice has been heard is 18 miles in the Grand Canyon of Colorado. Dr. Young records that at Gibraltar the human voice has been heard at a distance of 10 miles.

Joshua first proclaims what God has done in the past, as a motive for trusting and obeying him in the present. Gratitude and love are awakened by his wonderful goodness to them. Faith in him and Reverence and Awe are inspired by the manifestations of his divine power (vs. 1-13).

1. God's call to Abraham to leave the idolatry of his relatives and friends, and the bestowal of his loving guidance, and protection and blessing.
2. God's dealings with the patriarchs, and their discipline in Egypt.
3. The signs and wonders God wrought against Pharaoh in order to deliver his people.
4. The marvelous deliverance through the Red Sea.
5. Victory over the Amorites.
6. Balaam's curse changed into a blessing.
7. The crossing of Jordan at flood-tide.
8. The capture of Jericho.
9. Many victories.
10. The strange victory over two kings of the Amorites, "not with thy sword, nor with thy bow," but with hornets.

NOTE. The lamp of the past is the best light on the present. We know what God will do by what he has done. David's victory over the lion and the bear gave him hope of victory over the giant Goliath of Gath. Every victory over Christ's enemies is the assurance of his final triumph.

III. Joshua's Conference with the People. Decision Day. — Vs. 14-24.

JOSHUA.

Vs. 14, 15.

Urges the people to CHOOSE YOU THIS DAY WHOM YE WILL SERVE. Vs.

14, 15. 14. Now therefore, in view of these facts, **fear the LORD.**

Not be in terror before him, nor driven from him by fright, but hold him in reverential awe and respect, realize his power to help and to punish, so as to devote yourselves to him in perfect trust. There can be no trifling. **Serve him in sincerity and in truth.** Not in outward forms merely, but also in the heart and the life (John 4: 23, 24). The idea, says Professor Beecher, is rather of wholeness, integrity, than sincerity. Serve God completely, to the utmost. **Put away the gods which your fathers served.** We thus learn that idolatry lurked among the Israelites, and that it was that form of idolatry which had been known in the family of Terah of old (v. 2). **On the other side of the flood, i. e., of the river Euphrates, whence Abraham came. And serve ye the LORD.** Make your decision now and forever.

15. Choose you this day whom ye will serve. Cease to "halt between two

18. ^{And} the LORD drave out from before us all the ^{people,} ^{peoples,} even the Am'or-ites which dwelt in the land: ^{therefore} ^{will} we also ^{will} serve the LORD; for he ^{is} our God.

19. And Jōsh'u-a said unto the people, ¹Ye cannot serve the LORD; for he ^{is} an ²holy God; he ^{is} ³a jealous God; ⁴he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

20. ⁵If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, ⁶then he will turn and do you ^{hurt,} ^{evil,} and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

¹ Matt. 6: 24.² Lev. 19: 2; Psal. 99: 5, 9.³ Ex. 20: 5.⁴ Ex. 23: 21.⁵ 1 Chron. 28: 9; Isa. 1: 28.⁶ Josh. 23: 15; Acts 7: 42.

opinions," to be "everything by turns, and nothing long." They had been harboring idols (v. 23), and worshipping them in secret, while openly professing to serve God. It was high time for this to cease, for it was practically deciding for idols. The whole hope and prosperity of the nation depended upon a whole-hearted service of Jehovah.

PUT YOUR REASONS IN THE BALANCE.

AS TO SERVING IDOLS.

The gods which your fathers served in Chaldea. Your fathers rejected them — are they any better for you?

The gods of the Amorites, whose worshippers you have overcome, whose strongholds you have captured, who have shown themselves weak. Can they do better for you than they have done for their own worshippers?

See what kind of people these gods have made of their worshippers.

You have seen the pomp of their ceremonies.

You have felt the fascinations of a religion that makes licentiousness a part of its worship.

You have felt the social attractions of these worldly-minded and prosperous people.

But you have also seen the end of the wicked. What can they do for you compared with what your Almighty God has done for you and wants to do still more?

AS TO SERVING GOD.

All they had, all they were, all they hoped for had come from the LORD.

Gratitude, love, and duty, all combined to influence them to the choice of the true God.

God was invisible, and on that account could be everywhere present. He proved his existence by what he had done, as the flash of lightning reveals the existence of an unseen electric power in the clouds, or a shock by touching a live wire proves the reality of the unseen current flowing through it.

The prosperity of virtue and obedience, and their delights, though not so intense as the pleasures of idolatry, were long continued, and insured a happy and prosperous life for many years.

They were being trained as in a school to be a blessing to the whole world, to do more for the world than all the surrounding nations together had done or could do.

The restraints required were those which were necessary to a prosperous and peaceful life.

BUT AS FOR ME AND MY HOUSE, WE WILL SERVE THE LORD.

THE PEOPLE. 16. God forbid. Hebrew, "A profane thing be it to us." "The forsaking of Jehovah strikes them as something horrible and profane and shocking." — *Professor Beecher*. That we should forsake the LORD. The people decided, and sincerely, to serve God.

17. For the LORD our God. They rehearse the reasons given by Joshua, thus adopting them as their own and writing them on their memory.

JOSHUA. 19. Ye cannot serve the LORD, etc., *i. e.*, "ye cannot in your own strength; it is more difficult than you imagine." — *J. F., and B.* "It cannot be supposed for a moment that Joshua intended to deter the people from the service of God by representing it as impracticable or dangerous. On the contrary, his design is to enlist them more sincerely and steadfastly in it." — *Bush*. It was a

21. And the people said unto Jōsh'u-a, Nay; but we will serve the LORD.

22. And Jōsh'u-a said unto the people, Ye ^{are} witnesses against yourselves that ^{are} ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, ^{We are} ^{We are} witnesses.

23. Now therefore ² put away, *said he*, the strange gods which ^{are} among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD, ^{the} God of Is'ra-el.

24. And the people said unto Jōsh'u-a, The LORD our God will we serve, and ^{unto} his voice will we ^{obey.} ^{hearken.}

¹ Psa. 119: 173.

² V. 14; Gen. 35: 2.

very serious and difficult thing to serve God, and unless they were true-hearted and sincere they would not succeed. **For he is an holy God**, and therefore cannot endure anything impure or selfish or wicked in his children. **He is a jealous God**, unwilling to have a rival, as a true husband or wife is, and ought to be, unwilling to have a rival in the other's affections. Such a rival is intrinsically opposed to the very nature of the relation. **He will not forgive your transgressions.** Rather, "will not pass by," as if taking no notice. He will not tolerate your transgressions. He will punish them, and take every means to save you from them. It will not be possible, under God's rule, to prosper while continuing in sin, as was shown in the case of the fiery serpents and their complaints at Meribah, and the disaster at Ai. The appeal was made "in such terms as to challenge their manly resoluteness, and arouse their determination. As the quaint English commentator puts it, he 'drives the nail to the head.' He acts upon the maxim, 'Fast bind, fast find.' In his view, no hasty, superficial promising will do. So he sets the difficulties of the case before them, and then we have the colloquy in which they, in the face of the difficulties, reiterate their decision." — *Professor Beecher in S. S. Times.*

THE PEOPLE. 21. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but, rather, "for," V. 21. All you say makes our resolution more firm. Nothing can move us from our decision. Or possibly the sense is,—Nay, these evils will not come upon us, for we will serve the LORD. The warnings had a good effect. Warnings are not meant to frighten men into religion and right doing, but to utilize their foresight and wisdom and prudence, and to keep them from going blindly and ignorantly to destruction. The falling barometer does not frighten the ship's captain, but informs him and urges him to preparation against the coming storm.

JOSHUA. 22. Ye are witnesses against yourselves. Your public promise to obey will be a witness that you know your duty and accept the conditions of blessings for obedience and punishment for disobedience. This witness will warn you if you are tempted to go astray, and will justify God's dealings with you if, forsaking God, you suffer the bitter punishment.

23. Now therefore. If you have spoken truly, show it by your actions, and put away . . . the strange gods which are among you. This shows that there was need of Joshua's warning. The disease was only beginning, but if let alone it would destroy the whole body. And incline your heart unto the LORD God, for if they gave God their hearts they would not worship idols; and all acts of worship, even to the Lord, were in vain unless they proceeded from a heart of love. The supreme love of God was the fountain from which all morality and all their prosperity and success would flow. They only truly worship God who worship in spirit and in truth.

THE PEOPLE. 24. The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey. Thus the people made a threefold promise, under the most solemn circumstances. It was made under an appeal, under the power of the strongest and best motives that could be brought to bear upon them, when their minds were uplifted into clearest vision, above the smoke and clouds of earth. That was the right time to make a decision. God has given us feelings on purpose to move us to decide aright. Joshua did everything possible to confirm their decision and to render it enduring. He made them repeat it three times (vs. 16, 21, 24), each time in stronger terms, and in clearer light. Nor was it in vain. It was no decision vanishing like "the morning cloud and early dew," but it lasted for a whole generation, as long as the people lived who made this choice (Josh. 24: 31; Judg. 2: 7).

It is true that there came later reactions. Some one has said that "sudden resolutions,

25. So Jōsh'u-a ¹made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance ²in Shē'chem.

26. And Jōsh'u-a ³wrote these words in the book of the law of God; and ⁴he took a great stone, and ⁵set it up there ⁶under ^{an}the oak that ^{was}by the sanctuary of the LORD.

27. And Jōsh'u-a said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be ⁷a witness ^{unto}against us; for ⁸it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness ^{unto}against you, lest ye deny your God.

28. So ⁹Jōsh'u-a ^{let}the people ^{depart}away, every man unto his inheritance.

¹ Ex. 15: 25.

² V. 26.

³ Deut. 31: 24.

⁴ Judg. 9: 6.

⁵ Gen. 28: 18; Josh. 4: 3.

⁶ Gen. 35: 4.

⁷ Gen. 31: 48; Josh. 22: 27, 28.

⁸ Deut. 32: 1.

⁹ Judg. 2: 6.

like the sudden rise of the mercury in the barometer, indicate nothing but the changeableness of the weather." Sometimes this is true, but a deliberate, thoughtful resolution is a real elevation of the life. Battles may be lost in life's warfare, but there is a real gain if one continues to war against the evil within. Good resolutions pave not the pathway to hell, but the pathway to heaven. The only real failure is in not continuing to resolve till the end is gained. It took centuries for the Israelites to become wholly free from idolatry, but the result came.

ILLUSTRATION. Carlyle, speaking of the Reformation, says: "Once risen into this divine white heat of temper, *were it only for a season and not again*, it is henceforth considerable through all its remaining history. Nations are benefited for ages by being thrown once into divine white heat in this manner. And no nation that has not had such divine paroxysms at any time is apt to come to much." So these wonderful experiences help us all the rest of our lives. Revival heights bless us evermore; and when they have passed away, and we have come again into our ordinary routine, a new light still shines on the daily life, the level is higher, the ideal is nobler.

IV. **The Double Witness.** — Vs. 25-28. **FIRST. THE COVENANT.** 25. **Made a covenant with the people that day, i. e.,** "he solemnly ratified and renewed the covenant of Sinai (Ex. 19: 20), as Moses had done before him in the plains of Moab (Deut. 29: 1)." — *Cook*. **Set them a statute.** He determined and established "what in matters of religion should be with Israel law and right."

26. **And Joshua wrote.** "As Moses at Sinai wrote all the words that Jehovah had spoken in a book, probably a papyrus-roll (Ex. 24: 4), so Joshua now inscribed 'minutes' of the transactions connected with this renewal of the covenant at Shechem. **In the book of the law of God.** This protocol he placed inside the roll of the Law of Moses." — *Cambridge Bible*.

Joshua, who had been present at the ratification of both the previous covenants, renews it now, and doubtless with the same august ceremonial.

(a) Burnt-offerings and peace-offerings at the foot of the mount.

(b) The reading of every word of the Law in the ears of the people.

(c) The sprinkling of one-half of the blood of the victims on the altars and the roll containing the covenant conditions, and the other half on the people (Ex. 24: 3-8; Heb. 9: 19, 20).

(d) A solemn delivery of it to the priests, to be placed beside the Ark in the Holy of Holies, and to be read, in the hearing of all the people, once every seven years, at the Feast of Tabernacles (Deut. 31: 9-11, 25, 26).

SECOND. THE MONUMENT. **Took a great stone,** such as Jacob set up at Bethel (Gen. 28: 18), and



From a Photograph by Wilson.

The Samaritan Pentateuch.

This remarkable document is kept in a small synagogue in Shechem, and is said to be written by Abishua, the son of Phineas, the son of Aaron.

Moses set up at Sinai (Ex. 24: 4), and Joshua's mound of twelve stones to mark the crossing of the Jordan (Josh. 4: 3). **Under an (the) oak**, the oak of Moreh (Gen. 12: 6), where possibly the altar of Abraham and Jacob was still remaining.

27. This stone shall be a witness. It was present when the people made the covenant, and every time they saw the stone they would be reminded of their promise.

ILLUSTRATION. Webster's words on Bunker Hill: "That motionless shaft will be the most powerful of speakers. Its speech will be of civil and religious liberty. It will speak of patriotism and courage. It will speak of the moral improvement and elevation of mankind. Decrepit age will lean against its base, and ingenuous youth gather around it, speak to each other of the glorious events with which it is connected, and exclaim, 'Thank God, I also am an American.'"

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. There is only one right principle of living, and that is loving and choosing God with all the heart.

After one has made this choice, then there is need of confirming him in the choice, and guiding him in its expression in life.

2. The need of all others — of the majority of persons — is an impulse and reinforcement of motives which lead to this choice.

3. It is right and wise and safe to bring every good motive to bear upon those who are making the choice; to appeal to the reason, to the feelings, to conscience, to the sense of honor, to gratitude.

Impressions should be repeated, decisions should be expressed over and over again. A public confession is a great power for causing impressions to endure.

4. There are great advantages in large public meetings where every possible appeal can be made to persuade men to decide to serve God.

There is some danger in revival meetings and appeals, but there is a great deal more danger in their absence. The dangers can be largely eliminated, but nothing can compensate for their absence. The great need of to-day is a widespread Pentecostal revival caused by an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

5. We need decision days, when men shall publicly declare their choice of God and of his kingdom.

6. We need to enter into a covenant with God. There is great value in joining the church, and partaking of the Lord's Supper, which is a witness-monument of the Lord Jesus Christ.

7. **WITNESSING AGAINST OURSELVES.** It is still true of men that they are witnesses against themselves as to their duty toward God now; and they will be all the witnesses needed in the day of judgment. (1) Every sinner's conscience is a witness against his course. (2) The principles on which business men must act as the condition of worldly success will witness against those who refuse to apply like principles to religion, — principles which, if lived out, would lead them to be Christians. (3) The faultfindings of men against good people show that these faultfinders know what is right, and are to blame if they do not live up to it. (4) The principles on which good government in this world is based will justify God's moral dealings with men. (5) The obedience which parents require of their children, the gratitude acknowledged to be due for favors received, the honor demanded for those to whom honor belongs, will all witness to the justice of God's demand for our obedient and loving service. (6) Our professions of religion are an abiding witness against us, if we forsake God.

8. **A STORY FOR CHILDREN.** When Cyrus the Great desired to enlist the Persian warriors to join in his plans, he assembled the army on a certain day and place, and provided each with an axe. He marched them into the forest, and made them toil all day in cutting down trees, with coarse food and little rest. The next day he brought them to a great banquet, with abundant meat and rich wines in profusion, and bade them feast and be merry. They enjoyed it all the more after the hard fare of the previous day, and joined in merry songs and tales and dances. At evening Cyrus called them together, and asked which service they liked best. Then he said to them, "If you follow me, you will enjoy ease, abundance, and luxury. If you refuse, you must toil on in privations and hardships as you do now, and so end your days." — Condensed from Abbott's *Cyrus the Great*. So must we choose the service of God or the service of sin.

LESSON VII. — November 17.

GIDEON AND HIS THREE HUNDRED.

Judges 7: 9-23.

READ Judges 6-8. COMMIT vs. 17, 18.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Ye shall not fear them; for the Lord your God he shall fight for you.* — DEUT. 3: 22.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Make a careful study of the three chapters which record the story of Gideon.

1. The providential punishments of sin in the people. Compare with other instances.

2. Gideon's call. Compare with Isaiah's. With that of other Judges.

3. The gradual training and development of Gideon for his work.

Promises.

Signs.

Smaller heroism.

Gideon's humility.

Summons of the army.

More aids to faith.

Tests of the army.

More aids to faith.

The courageous attack.

The victory.

"Faint, yet pursuing."

Teaching cowards with horns.

"A snare unto Gideon."

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Take a general view of the book of Judges, and note the general character of the government. Note also the reforms and the backslidings of the people, and the methods by which God was training them.

Compare the efforts of a child and young man to grow better, the failures and the successes, and the slow progress often made.

Place a map of Galilee before your scholars. Let them point out Nazareth; have them in imagination climb the hill above the village, which Jesus as a boy must often have climbed; and, looking to the south-east, see what Jesus must often have seen, — the place where the Midianites were encamped and the camping ground of the Israelites. Before the minds of the scholars should pass the departure of the larger part of Gideon's army, the selection of the three hundred, the night attack, the victory which brought peace to Israel, as, while one points out the places, the others tell the story.

Then draw from them what Gideon teaches them for their every-day life.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"The Son of God goes forth to war."

"For all the saints who from their labors rest."

SCRIPTURE AIDS.

Judges 6-8; Psalm 107; Deuteronomy 28; Isa. 9: 1-5; 10: 24-26.

LEARN BY HEART.

V. 18; Eph. 6: 10-12; Ps. 107: 11-15.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — The period of the Judges lasted, according to our Bible margins, 332 years, B. C. 1427-1095 (including Eli and Samuel). Gideon lived about the middle of this period.

Many scholars make the period shorter, and place it later. The question is unsettled.

Place. — The broad valley of Jezreel, which extends from the plain of Esdraelon southeast to the Jordan. The southern part of Galilee. The test of the three hundred was by the Well Harod, 13 miles from the Jordan, and 10 miles south of Nazareth.

In this region took place the great battle in which Saul and his sons were slain (1 Sam. 29: 1; 31: 1).

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Compare the three hundred men that stopped the advance of the Persian hordes at Thermopylae; in any Greek history.

See Plutarch's "Fabius Maximus" for a stratagem similar to Gideon's. In Carlyle's *Past and Present*, book III., chap. 2, is an extended simile drawn from Gideon's fleece.

Sir Walter Scott's *Marmion* describes the summoning of the Scotch clans by the fiery cross.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The International Critical Commentary, Prof. George F. Moore (Scribner's, 1895). *The Polychrome Bible*, "Judges," Prof. G. F. Moore (1898, Dodd & Mead). *Cambridge Bible*, "Judges," by Rev. J. J. Lias, M. A. *The New Century Bible*, "Judges and Ruth" (1896, Oxford University Press).

The late Professor Elmslie's *Expository Lectures* has one lecture on Gideon which shows great insight. Prof. George Adam Smith's *Historical Geography* gives a dramatic description of the scene, and the best explanation of the choice of the three hundred. Lang's *Gideon and the Judges*. *Bible Characters*, Gideon to Absalom, by Alexander Whyte. Marcus Dods' *Israel's Iron Age*.

**HOME WORK
AND CLASS DISCUSSION.**

The book of Judges.
The training and development of Israel by sin, punishment, and deliverance.
The life of Gideon.
The gradual training of Gideon.
The aids to his faith.
The test of the three hundred.
"Gideon's fleece."
"Faint, yet pursuing."

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Are you willing to be one of the soldiers under our Leader Jesus Christ, who are seeking to save the world from the powers of evil?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.**SUBJECT: How a Victory Was Gained Over the Enemies of the Kingdom of God.**

- I. THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES.
 - II. THE CRY OUT OF THE DEPTHS.
Decline. Punishment. The cry for help.
 - III. THE ANSWER. GOD RAISES UP GIDEON.
 - IV. GIDEON'S SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLMASTERS.
 - V. THE SIFTING OF THE THREE HUNDRED (Judg. 7: 1-7).
 - VI. VICTORY BY THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON (vs. 9-23).
- THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

I. The Period of the Judges. — THE BOOK OF JUDGES is a collection of records belonging to the period between the death of Joshua and the birth of Samuel, a period of 280 years according to our common chronology. But if we add together the numbers given in Judges they amount to 410 years. For this and other reasons it is entirely probable that "the oppressions and deliverances were not successive, but, in part, synchronous. They were, in fact, without exception, local struggles; and it is not only conceivable, but highly probable, that while one part of the land was enjoying security under its judge other tribes were groaning under the foreign yoke." — *Professor Moore*. While several of the events were thus occurring at the same time in different parts of the land, in other cases the judges ruled practically over the whole. "The judges formed temporary heads in particular centers, or over particular groups of tribes, — Barak, in the north of Israel, Gideon, in the center, Jephthah, on the east of Jordan, Samson, in the extreme southwest." — *Driver*.

THREE PARTS. The book of Judges consists of three parts: (1) chapters 1—2: 5; (2) 2: 6—16: 31, the Judges proper; (3) chapters 17—21, an appendix.

DATE. The date of compilation, and of its present form, is uncertain, but there were early records, and, doubtless, written histories of these events not far from the time of their occurrence.

GOVERNMENT. The government was a theocracy; *i. e.*, God himself was the chief ruler, and there was no visible central supreme power, either in king, president, or congress; a most excellent plan if the people all remained good. Each tribe was independent. The people were divided into hereditary clans, something like the clans of the Scotch Highlanders. Each village was complete and independent. The laws were the laws given them through Moses, and no new ones were made.

RELIGION AND EDUCATION. There was a central place of religious worship at Shiloh for the whole nation. Here were the tabernacle, the ark, the altar for daily sacrifices; and hence at this place the tribes were to assemble three times a year for the great feasts. The Levites were intended to be scattered through the nation, as its religious teachers. We know that in Samuel's times there were schools of the prophets in various places. The religious institutions bound the people together into one nation; and the Mosaic laws separated them from all other nations, thus intensifying the national idea.

BACKSLIDINGS. TROUBLES. DELIVERANCE. PROSPERITY AND GROWTH. From a hasty reading of the book without studying the length of the various periods, we obtain a

false impression that the greater portion of the history of this period was occupied with decadence, sins, and wars. But if you add together the periods of oppression and the periods of "rest" there will be 74 of the former to 268 of "rest."

"The times of quiet and unbroken peace,
Though for a nation times of blessedness,
Give back faint echoes from the historian's page."

A simple crime or accident will occupy more space in the newspapers than a whole lifetime of holy and peaceful living. So in the ordinary histories of the Wars of the Roses in England one would scarcely gain a hint of the progress and development of the people, while the leaders were busy with fighting.

"Whate'er of folly, shame, or crime
Within thy mighty bounds transpires
With speed defying space and time
Comes to us on the accusing wires ;

"While all thy wealth of noble deeds,
Thy homes of peace, thy votes unsold,
Thy love that pleads for human needs,
The wrongs redressed, but half is told !

"Each poor wretch, in his prison cell
Or gallows-noose, is interviewed ;
We know the single sinner well,
And not the nine and ninety good.

"Yet, if on daily scandals fed,
We seem at times to doubt thy worth,
We know thee still, when all is said,
The best, the dearest spot on earth."
— Whittier.

DEVELOPMENT. A real growth was going on during these periods of suffering and anarchy, and of deliverance and peace. "They learned by perpetual struggle to defend their new home, and the free exercise of their religion, and so they prepared for coming generations a sacred place where that religion and national culture might develop. During the long pause of apparent inaction, a hidden movement was going on, and the principles and truths so marvellously brought to light were taking firm root." — *Ewald*.

II. **The Cry Out of the Depths.** — THE MORAL DECLINE. At the close of a long period of peace and prosperity the people had degenerated morally. Business transactions with the Canaanites, — transactions which often required the performance of religious rites, — made it easy not to realize the difference between them. They were attracted by the easy morals of the heathen. The God of the Israelites was invisible, and time had dimmed the memory of his wonderful deeds in their behalf. His laws were very strict, for their good. Worldliness prevailed. The people fell from their high estate into irreligion and immorality.

THE REMEDIAL PUNISHMENT. Something must be done to stop this downward course, and make "the way of transgressors" so hard that they would turn to God for help.

The northern part of Palestine, west of the Sea of Galilee, including the great plain of Esdraelon, was a "land flowing with milk and honey," when protected by Divine Providence for his obedient children.

There were rich orchards, vineyards, olive groves, and gardens. Here in this garden has flourished the vine, the olive and the fig, the oak, the hardy walnut, the myrtle, the almond, the pomegranate, the citron, the most beautiful fruit trees, flowering trees and shrubs, and aromatic plants with an infinite profusion of flowers. Here were found all the productions which made Italy rich and beautiful, and more. See Selah Merrill's *Galilee in the Time of Christ*. This delightful spot is "an island in the midst of pirates, the Bedouin tribes who are the Corsairs of the wilderness." — *Stanley*. The wandering hordes of the desert, the predominating power being the Midianites, who were the traveling merchantmen of the East, coveted the riches of this favored region which seemed the very gates of paradise; and to the number of at least one hundred and thirty-five thousand (Judg. 8: 10) "streamed over the fords of the Jordan year by year, migrating thither, with their households and herds, in such numbers as could only be compared, by those whom they invaded, to a flight of locusts; which, indeed, they rivaled in destructiveness." — *Geikie*. "They swept over almost the whole land, pitched their tents, and fed their camels in the midst of the rich cornfields of Israel. This was the most extensive and destructive servitude the nation had yet suffered. The people fled to mountain fastnesses, and hid themselves in caves, and a grievous famine ensued." — *Dean Milman*. All this continued for seven years (Judg. 6: 1).

Mrs. Ghosn-el-Howie, of Syria, states in the *Sunday School Times* that these troublesome people still continue to overrun this inviting district, plundering the people and rendering it unsafe for man and beast.

THE CRY FROM THE DEPTHS. In their great distress the people began to repent and cry unto the Lord for help. A prophet was sent to show them that their trouble was on

account of their sins (Judg. 6: 7-10). It was sin that had taken away the wall of defence which would have made them secure. God himself was their fortress.

"Because they rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the Most High:

"Therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and *there was* none to help.

"Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses" (Psa. 107: 11-13).

III. The Answer, — God Raises Up Gideon. — Gideon belonged to the tribe of Manasseh. His father's name was Joash and he lived at Ophrah, not far from Shechem. He was a man of highly noble person, and of a noble race, like the son of a king, and whose brothers "each one resembled the children of a king" (Judg. 8: 18). He was a man of strong common sense, a patriot, a true lover of God, cautious, modest, brave, and enthusiastic. The signs of the fleece (Judg. 6: 36-40), says Ewald, illustrate Gideon's own character: warm and zealous, while all around were indifferent and cold; calm and cool, when all around were excited. Gideon was probably a middle-aged man at this time, for he had a son of his own almost grown up (Judg. 8: 20).

One day an angel messenger came to Gideon while employed in threshing grain. "Like Cincinnatus at his farm, and David among his sheep, and Cromwell in the flats at Huntingdonshire, and Washington on his plantation in Virginia, Gideon was quietly doing his humble task, not wishing nor dreaming of a wider horizon or more conspicuous work, when the summons came to him, the divine Voice that dragged him from peaceful privacy and thrust him to the front." — *Alexander Maclaren*. One of the greatest writers of our time, says Geo. Adam Smith, has said about the story of Gideon that "in force and beauty it is equal to any episode in the epic poems of Greece."

IV. Gideon's Schools and Schoolmasters. — 1. One proof that a man is called to a great work is his willingness to undergo the necessary preparation. The twelve apostles were apparently but common men, but they were willing to spend two or three years at school with Christ himself, and thus become trained for their great work. Had they refused this, they would have remained forever in their obscurity.

2. Gideon was experiencing the same troubles as the people whom he was sent to deliver. He knew what was wanted and on what conditions it could be granted.

3. All Gideon's previous faithfulness in daily life, his unselfishness, his piety, had been preparing him unconsciously for the great work of his life. By daily duties done from worthy motives we are prepared for our life's work. Life is ennobled by doing even the smallest actions with the noblest motives.

4. Gideon did the best he could with what he had. He could not thresh out his wheat on the threshing floor, which, for the sake of the wind, must be on a hilltop, in sight of the invaders. "Gideon, therefore, took his grain to the winepress, probably into the little house of the winepress, and there in a space not big enough to fling a flail in, he beat out the grain slowly and painfully and with rods. It is a picture of a man manfully doing the only duty possible to him under extreme disadvantage, while his heart is being gnawed with doubt. . . . This, then, is heroism — the making the most of what we have. God meets us never on some fancy ground of our own choice, but where he has placed us in the dust and din of our common life. Remember to make the most of what you have, when you are tempted to complain that you have no opportunity for the great hopes with which your heart is bursting. Remember Gideon whom God met and called a hero because, while suffering from both doubt and adversity, he still did what he could do with a brave and a dogged heart." — *Report of Sermon by Prof. Geo. Adam Smith*.

"The common problem, yours and mine, every one's
Is, not to fancy what were fair in life
Provided it could be, — but finding first
What may be, then find how to make it fair
Up to our means."

— *Browning*.

5. He was prepared for his larger work by a lesser duty which required the same qualities, and which tested his fitness, awoke in him a consciousness of his own possibilities through the aid of God, strengthened his faith in God, and proved the weakness of the gods on which Israel's enemies depended. Gideon had a work to do in his own village and in his father's house. That very night he bravely threw down the altar of Baal. And not only cut down the pillar of Ashtaroth, but split it up for fuel; and, having laid it on the altar of Jehovah, used it to consume, in sacrifice to him, a bullock which his father had

apparently consecrated to Baal. Gideon's action was like that of the brave Hawaiian princess Kapiolani, who defied the very home of the idols her people worshiped, on the brink of a terrible volcano. The citizens were angry when they discovered what Gideon had done, and would have put him to death, but his father's clever irony saved him.

6. Gideon was a man triumphant over doubts. It is remarkable that God chose a man who not only felt the strain of this terrible burden, but whom the strain had filled with doubt. For the very highest work God seldom chooses men who have not doubted, but the most of them have been doubters only about themselves. Gideon was summoned from a still darker temper of mind. It was not only himself or his people he doubted; it was the good will and power of God to save them (Judg. 6: 13). Academic doubts and intellectual restlessness are of no practical profit. "But doubt that rises from the practical pressure of life, from the awful mass of labor that still lies before society, from the apparent indifference of the highest powers of the universe, though it is the awfulest doubt into which man may enter, is yet of the kind that God can use. But the strong lesson for us is that there is no doubt too deep for God to lift a man out of and make him a man of faith and victorious energy." — *Geo. Adam Smith*.

7. Note how the doubts of Gideon are overcome by the manifestations of God's personal presence.

An angel messenger comes to him.

He asked a sign and it was given him to prove that the messenger came from God (Judg. 6: 17-24).

He asked another sign, that of the fleeces exposed to the dew, in order that he might be sure that the power which had wrought wonders in olden time was really present with him (Judg. 6: 36-40).

Later, when he was about to make his attack, he was sent into the Midianite camp to be strengthened by what he heard (vs. 9-14).

Thus, too, we grow strong in faith for work in God's kingdom, when we see signs of God's present power among us, his wonders of redemption, of transformations of men, of his guiding hand in our own personal and national history.

8. His doubts were removed by doing the work he was called to do.

V. The Sifting of the Three Hundred. — Vs. 1-7. Gideon, thus prepared, first summoned his own clan, then the northern tribes. Thirty-two thousand assembled on the northern slope of Mt. Gilboa, near the fountain of Harod, opposite the camp of the Midianites. His summons reminds us of the beautiful custom of ancient Scotland of assembling their clans by means of the *fiery cross*. A light cross of wood was charred at its point, and the flames quenched in the blood of a goat. This was sent around to the villages and homes of the clan, each one sending it on to his next neighbor, with only the name of the meeting-place. And every one was bound under fearful anathemas to obey the sign. The summons was swift and sure.

"When flits this cross from man to man,
Vich Alpine's summons to his clan,
Burst be the ear that fails to heed!
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed!"

Although the Israelites were only 32,000 (v. 3) to the Midianite 135,000 (Judg. 8: 10), or about one to four, yet there were too many both for the stratagem and for the moral effect of proving that God was in the victory.

THE SIFTING OF THE ARMY. Gideon proclaimed: "Whoever is fearful and afraid, let him depart." In view of the fearful odds against them two-thirds of the army turned back, leaving only 10,000 soldiers. Faith and courage were the first sieve.

Still there were too many for the purpose. The second sieve was woven of alertness, quick wit, self-control, vigorous strength, boldness. The test was through their way of drinking in the near presence of the enemy.

In order to understand the test we must see clearly the circumstances. Gideon's army was on one side of the stream, and the enemy on the other, and how near some scouting parties might be was unknown, for the reeds and shrubs along the banks afforded ample cover for hostile ambushes. Those who bowed down, drinking headlong, did not appreciate their position or the foe; while the others, who merely crouched, lapping up the water with one hand, while they held their weapons in the other, were aware of their danger, and ready against surprise. Thus the three hundred showed exactly the qualities needed for the night attack which a few careless men might spoil. See "Gideon" in *Geo. Adam Smith's Forgiveness of Sins and his Historical Geography*.

9. And it came to pass the same ¹ night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down <sup>unto the host ;
into the camp ;</sup> for I have delivered it into thine hand.

10. But if thou fear to go down, go thou with <sup>Phu'rah
Pu'rah</sup> thy servant down to the <sup>host :
camp :</sup>

11. And thou shalt ² hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down <sup>unto the host.
camp.</sup> Then went he down with <sup>Phu'rah
Pu'rah</sup> his servant unto the <sup>outside
outermost part</sup> of the ^a armed men that <sup>were
were</sup> in the <sup>host.
camp.</sup>

12. And the Mid'i-an-ites and the Am'a-lék-ites and ³ all the children of the east lay along in the valley like <sup>grasshoppers
locusts</sup> for multitude; and their camels ^{were} without number, as the sand <sup>by the sea side
which is upon the sea shore</sup> for multitude.

13. And when Gid'e-on was come, behold, <sup>there was
there was</sup> a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the <sup>host
camp</sup> of Mid'i-an, and came unto ^a the tent, and smote it that it fell, and <sup>overturned it,
turned it upside down,</sup> that the tent lay along.

14. And his fellow answered and said, This ^{is} nothing else save the sword of Gid'e-on the son of Jō'āsh, a man of Is'ra-el: ^{for} into his hand <sup>hath God
God hath</sup> delivered Mid'i-an, and all the host.

15. And it was ^{so,} when Gid'e-on heard the telling of the dream, and ^b the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped; <sup>and
and he</sup> returned into the <sup>host
camp</sup> of Is'ra-el, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Mid'i-an.

¹ Gen. 46 : 2, 3.

² Vs. 13, 14, 15; Gen. 24 : 14; 1 Sam. 14 : 9, 10.

³ Judg. 6 : 5, 33; 8 : 10.

^a Or, ranks by five. Ex. 13 : 18.

^b Hebrew, the breaking thereof.

Those who lapped, that is, tossed the water into their mouths with their hands, as a dog does with his tongue, without interruption in the march, and with eyes watching for the enemy. This requires strength as well as alertness; "and the hunter or shepherd who is in the habit of drinking in this way, instead of kneeling down to drink, is the one who is never off his guard, not even while he drinks;" — such were the immortal three hundred.

Those who kneeled or lay down to drink in a more comfortable position, but were exposed to any sudden attack while off their guard.

Men can to this day be seen drinking in each of these ways.

Thus the test was not arbitrary, but was a real test of fitness.

COMPARE the three hundred at the gates of Thermopylæ; and Ethan Allen, before Fort Ticonderoga, offering to all who wished free permission to remain behind and not enter upon the dangerous attack, as stated in the story of *The Green Mountain Boys*. See also the story of Cromwell's enlistment of his Ironsides upon the eve of the civil war. "Cromwell did as Gideon did. His large levies he winnowed and sifted again and again, turning away numbers of volunteers, and choosing those whom he kept, not so much because of their strength or experience, as 'because they had the fear of God.'"

VI. The Victory by the Sword of the Lord and of Gideon. — Vs. 9-23. THE ENCOURAGEMENT. — Vs. 9-15. Everything was now ready, except a new inbreathing of courage and faith. To accomplish this Gideon and his officer went early in the night into the camp of the Midianites sleeping in the security of their numbers. Listening near a tent, they heard a man telling to his comrade a dream from which he had just awakened. Compare with v. 13 the translation and annotation of the *Polychrome Bible*. "I dreamed that a cake of barley griddle-bread, — a kind of flat, round, hard-baked ash-cake, representing the Israelite peasantry — was rolling hither and thither through the camp of Midian, and it came to a tent and struck it and turned it upside down." The men interpreted the dream as meaning the overthrow of Midian by Israel.

Gideon, hearing this, first worshiped God, and then, returning to his three hundred, cried out, (v. 15) **Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.**

16. And he divided the three hundred men ^{into} ^{into} three companies, and he put ^{a trumpet in every man's hand, with} empty pitchers, ^{and lamps} within the pitchers.

17. And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the ^{outside} ^{outermost part} of the camp, it shall be ^{that,} ^{that,} as I do, so shall ye do.

18. When I blow ^{with} ^a trumpet, I and all that ^{are} ^{are} with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, ^{The sword of} ^{For} the LORD ^{of} ^{for} Gid'e-on.

19. So Gid'e-on, and the hundred men that ^{were} ^{were} with him, came unto the ^{outside} ^{outermost part} of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; ^{and} ^{when} they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and brake ^{in pieces} the pitchers that ^{were} ^{were} in their hands.

20. And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the ^{lamps} ^{torches} in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow ^{withal:} ^{withal:} and they cried, The sword of the LORD and of Gid'e-on.

21. And they ¹ stood every man in his place round about the camp: ² and all the host ran; ^{and} ^{cried, and fled.} ^{and they shouted, and put them to flight.}

22. And ^{they} ^{blew} the three hundred ³ blew the trumpets, and ⁴ the LORD set ⁵ every man's sword against his fellow, ^{even throughout} ^{and against} all the host: and the host fled ^{to} ^{as far as} Bēth-shī'tah ⁱⁿ ^{Zer'e-rath, and to} the ^a border of A'bēl-me-hō'lah, ^{unto} ^{by} Tāb'bath.

23. And the men of Is'ra-el ^{were} ^{were} gathered ^{themselves} together out of Nāph'ta-li, and out of Ash'er, and out of all Ma-nās'seh, and pursued after ^{the Mid'i-an-ites.} ^{Mid'i-an.}

¹ Ex. 14: 13, 14; 2 Chron. 20: 17.

² 2 Kings 7: 7.

³ Josh. 6: 4.

⁴ Psa. 83: 9; Isa. 9: 4.

⁵ 1 Sam. 14: 20; 2 Chron. 20: 23.

^a Hebrew, *lip*.

THE PLAN OF BATTLE. — Vs. 16-18. 16. Divided the three hundred men into three companies so as to appear at once on all sides of the Midianite camp. The line probably was stretched out so as to nearly surround the enemy on the sides toward the Israelites. Put a trumpet in every man's hand. These and the lamps were not usually in the hands of common soldiers, but appertained to the leaders. From v. 8, as punctuated in the Septuagint, we learn that the three hundred took the trumpets of all the people, that is, of the ten thousand who did not take part in the midnight attack. This gave the impression that there were three hundred bands making the attack. Empty pitchers. Such as were used to carry water or keep meal in, of earthenware, and of considerable size. These were used to conceal the lamps, or torches, till the time came to break them, when the crash of so many jars would seem like the clash of armed men.

19. The beginning of the middle watch. "The night was divided into three watches; the first watch, the middle watch, and the morning watch." — Prof. G. F. Moore in *Int. Crit. Com.* Hence the attack was made about midnight.

The stratagem of Gideon was simple. The torches were concealed in the large pitchers, or bread-jars, until the men had taken their stations, so that their movement might not be detected. It was the duty of the leader of a band to blow the trumpet and give the war-cry. By him, in a night attack, stood a torch-bearer to light the way, and guide the soldiers so that they might always know where to find the leader; the torch at night was like the banner of day. Three hundred trumpets and torches represented three hundred companies of troops; the breaking of the jars, the outflashing of the lights, the deafening blare of trumpets on every side aroused the enemy from sleep. The Israelites seemed by the many lights and trumpets to be present in overwhelming numbers. Each heathen in the darkness mistook his neighbor for a foe. They slew one another. The panic was universal. The invaders, encumbered with women and children and plunder of flocks and herds, as nomadic invaders are always cumbered, fled in confusion, and scattered over the country,

throughout which Gideon immediately sent runners to arouse the people. The fords of the Jordan were seized by the Israelites, and the destruction of the invaders was complete.

EXAMPLES. There have been many instances of somewhat similar victories of the few over the many. For example, "Maryland's Cornstalk Militia" in the Revolutionary War, when Mr. Purnell stationed himself on horseback on a hill, and had his servants, armed with cornstalks for guns, march over the hill in sight of the enemy, and returning behind the hill march over it again and again, giving the appearance of a large body of soldiers. Rosecrans once did the same thing with his small company, marching to music all night. Keil gives several instances of such stratagems from ancient and modern history. Hannibal extricated himself in a similar manner, when surrounded by Fabius. See Plutarch, *Fabius Maximus*, 6: 6. According to the *Cambridge Bible*, "Niebuhr relates how in the last century an Arab chief escaped from a fortress in which he was besieged by a vastly superior force, through the employment of the same means as we here find employed by Gideon."

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. Sometimes we are disheartened at the presence of so many enemies and so strong. The Holy Land of Christianity is exposed to such fierce assaults of the principalities and powers of the prince of darkness that we begin to fear for the kingdom of God. So the Holy Land of each soul, where God should be king, has often been overrun by wrong thoughts, ambitions, lusts of the flesh, hatred, indolence, selfishness. These devastate God's heritage.

2. But God has given us a Leader who can conquer by few as by many; he raises up those who are quick, alert, and strong who will do as he does, and cause the enemy to fly, and to destroy one another.

3. But the story of Gideon does not teach that he cares nothing for means adapted to the end. Gideon had faith, but he used his forces in the best way, and selected the three hundred because of their adaptation to the special service required, and accomplished his victory by the wisest use of means, with the least loss.

4. In the Christian warfare the *trumpets* express our power of speaking for God. The *lamps* are our character and example, lighted by God's grace, and shining for men; and the *pitchers* represent our capacity of receiving the truth and the spirit of God. Thus armed, the Christian can enter upon the warfare against evil with the certainty of victory.

5. Professor Elmslie writes: "Here was the hero's opportunity, for there are always in a healthy nation heroes lying in wait for opportunity. . . . I think one of the most pathetic things in the world's history is that so often men of magnificent heroic character have lived in times when they had no chance to show it." But if they were real heroes they would find in the moral warfare against sin in the world and in their hearts a wide enough field for the loftiest heroism.

The poet says:

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark, unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

But the gem is a real gem forever, whether seen or unseen, and somewhere, at some time, it will shine for the good of others.

LESSON VIII.—November 24.

WORLD'S TEMPERANCE SUNDAY.—Romans 14: 12-23.

COMMIT vs. 17, 18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—*Judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.*—ROM. 14: 13.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Compare Romans 14; 1 Cor. 8; 10: 23-33; Acts 15; Galatians 2.

From these learn what problems were perplexing the early Christians, troubling their consciences, and dividing opinions.

Learn how they settled these difficult questions.

Compare them with problems of a similar nature which perplex the present day.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

The great object in teaching this lesson is to aid the children to come to a positive and wise decision on the temperance question. Or, if they have decided before, confirm them in it.

See that they sign the pledge.

See that you do not put a stumbling-block in their way.

The decision of such a question is very far-reaching. It is deciding on a principle as well as on an act.

"The French have a proverb, 'When you are right you are more right than you think you are.' The converse of this is equally true, when you are wrong you are more wrong than you imagine."

A debate among the scholars themselves may be turned to good account.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

On Romans. — *Expositor's Greek Testament* on "Romans," by Prof. James Denny, D. D. (The whole volume, Acts-Corinthians, \$7.50. Dodd & Mead.) *International Critical Commentary*, by Professor Sanday, of Oxford (Scribner's). Prof. M. R. Vincent's *Studies in the New Testament* is capital (Scribner's). Lyman Abbott's *Illustrated Commentary* (A. S. Barnes & Co., New York). The *American Commentary* (Baptist Pub. Soc.), the *Commentary* by C. Hodge (1889 ed., Presbyterian), and many others.

On Temperance. — The latest book (1906) is *The Saloon Problem and Social Reform*, by Prof. John Marshall Barker (\$1.00. Everett Press, Boston).

Temperance Bible Studies, by F. N. Peloubet, full of temperance illustrations for the class.

Elijah Tone, Citizen, a capital temperance story, by Amos R. Wells (Christian Endeavor Soc.).

Substitutes for the Saloon is the result of an investigation by the Committee of Fifty, edited by Rev. Raymond Calkins, Ph. D. *Reply to the Physiological Subcommittee of the Committee of Fifty*, by W. C. T. U., 23 Trull Street, Boston. *Weapons for Temperance Warfare*, by Belle M. Brain.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: The True Attitude Toward Temperance Questions.

I. PROBLEMS CONCERNING RIGHT AND WRONG.

Three kinds of actions from a moral point of view.

II. SOME DIFFICULT ANCIENT PROBLEMS.

III. SOME DIFFICULT MORAL PROBLEMS.

IV. PRINCIPLES BY WHICH WE SHOULD BE GUIDED (v. 12).

1. Law of liberty.
2. Responsibility to God.
3. Refusing to condemn others.
4. Avoid what causes others to stumble.
5. Do all with reference to the promotion of the kingdom of God.

V. APPLICATIONS TO TEMPERANCE AND CIGARETTES.

The right not to use.
"Uncle Sam" and the saloon keeper.
Business men's advice to boys.
Testimony of business men.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 16, 17, 21; 1 Cor. 8: 13.

LIGHT FROM OTHER SCRIPTURES.

Drunkenness. — Deut. 21: 20, 21; Prov. 20: 1; 21: 17; 23: 20, 21, 29-34; 31: 4, 5; Isa. 5: 11, 22; Hos. 4: 11; Hab. 2: 15; Matt. 24: 49, 50; Luke 21: 34; 1 Cor. 5: 11; Gal. 5: 21.

Temperance. — Rom. 13: 13; 1 Cor. 9: 25-27; 1 Tim. 3: 2, 3, 8; Tit. 2: 12; 1 Pet. 4: 7; 5: 8; 2 Pet. 1: 6.

DECISION DAY.

Resolve to be forever opposed to the drinking of intoxicating liquors.
Sign the temperance pledge.

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The early church problem of two Sabbath days.
The early church problem of meat offered to idols.
Sum up the arguments for drinking intoxicating liquors.
Sum up the personal arguments against it.
What is the argument from the effect of our example on others?
Does Paul's decision apply here?
How about the use of cigarettes?

I. Problems Concerning Right and Wrong. — **FIRST.** There are certain acts which are universally conceded to be right, and to come within the Christian law of liberty. About these, people of fair common sense and religious intelligence have no question, and do them freely.

SECOND. There are other acts which are as plainly prohibited. To do them is wrong and always wrong.

THIRD. There are a very large number of acts which lie in the twilight region, between the day of certain right and the night of acknowledged wrong. They are not wrong in themselves, but according to the circumstances and motives of their doing. Dr. Abbott, in his able commentary on Romans, says: "How to determine what is right and what wrong among these questioned acts is a problem which has perplexed not only every conscientious and even every timid person, but also every teacher of practical morals in every age and nation."

II. Some Difficult Ancient Problems.—The circumstances of the early Christian church which was composed of Jews and Gentiles, and was placed in the midst of heathen customs, compelled the Christians to confront a number of very difficult questions of right and wrong.

There were two Sabbaths: the regular Jewish Sabbath and the Lord's day, which Christians were beginning to use for Sabbath worship. Which should they keep? Should they keep both? What should they do in heathen lands where there were no Sabbaths and no suspension of business, and where if servants or employees should refuse to work one day a week, it would bring great inconvenience to others (Rom. 14: 5, 6).

What should Jewish Christians do about attending social or wedding feasts among the heathen converts, or even eating with them in their homes, where they were likely to be served with meats which were forbidden to the Jews? How about Christian fellowship if they refused? (Rom. 14: 2, 3; 1 Cor. 10: 23-25; Gal. 2: 11-14.)

A similar question among those who believed it right to eat animal food was whether it was right to eat flesh that had been offered to idols. A large portion of the meat offered for sale in the markets had been offered in some heathen temple as a sacrifice to idols. Should they eat of such meat? Were they, in so doing, partakers in idol worship? (Acts 15: 29; 1 Cor. 8: 1, 7-10; 10: 23-25.)

III. Some Difficult Modern Problems.—There are not a few questions similar to those which perplexed the early church, which continually come up for settlement by the modern church, which must be answered according to the principles laid down by Paul in this lesson.

Many of them are connected with amusement or recreation. Is it right to dance? to play cards? to play billiards? to go to the theater? to attend fashionable parties? to use tobacco?

Others are connected with Sabbath observance, as using the electric or steam cars, canoeing, driving, riding, wheeling on the Sabbath.

But first and foremost comes the question of total abstinence from wine, beer, and the lighter alcoholic drinks, and the best methods of advancing temperance, as by prohibition, local option, high license, a special political party, the use of cigarettes by boys, and the example of men before them.

The difficulty arises from the fact that most of these things are not necessarily wrong under all circumstances. Every one knows that a piece of pictured cardboard "is nothing," or a billiard ball, or a movement of the feet to music. There are times of sickness or pain when most persons would believe that it would be right to take a glass of wine if ordered by a physician. It is a common report that many years ago a student was expelled from Yale College for bowling, while now that university provides bowling alleys. The principle on which it was done still holds, but the circumstances and influences of the act have almost entirely changed.

Ministers and teachers should not merely say to the youthful inquirers that "they must decide these questions for themselves," as is too often done. They must decide them for themselves, but Christian leaders are to help them to decide, to point out the principles on which they must decide, to show them the facts which will guide to a right decision.

IV. The Principles Paul Laid Down for Our Guidance.—Vs. 12-23. The method of settlement is that employed all through the Bible, of laying down general principles, and not definite rules and commands. For the principles abide eternally, but the application of them varies continually. We have no trouble whatever about some of the questions which almost rent the ancient church asunder. They were settled long ago. But we must apply the same principles to our modern problems. The application of great divine principles to our daily lives in varying circumstances is a large part of the discipline by which we grow in grace and develop a strong and holy character.

FIRST. THE LAW OF LIBERTY.—V. 12; 1 Cor. 8: 9; 10: 29; Gal. 2: 4.

12. So then. As a conclusion from what Paul had been saying. **Every one of us shall give account of himself to God.** Each is responsible to God and must act as in

12. So then ¹every ^{each} one of us shall give account of himself to God.
13. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge ^{ye} this rather, that ²no man put a stumblingblock ^{or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling.}
14. I know, and am persuaded ⁱⁿ the Lord Jesus, ³that ^{there is} nothing ^{is} unclean of itself: ^{but} ^{save that} ⁴to him ^{that esteemeth any thing who accounteth anything} to be unclean, to him ^{it is} unclean.
15. ^{But} ^{For} if thy brother be grieved with ^{thy} meat, now ^{because of meat thy brother is grieved, thou} walkest ^{thou not charitably. no longer in love.} ⁵Destroy not him with thy meat, ^{for whom Christ died.}
16. ⁶Let not then your good be evil spoken of:
17. ⁷For the kingdom of God is not ^{meat} ^{and} ^{drink;} ^{for} ^{drinking,} but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.
18. For he that ^{in these things herein} serveth Christ ⁸ ^{is acceptable is well-pleasing} to God, and approved of men.
19. ⁹Let us therefore ^{So then let us} follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith ¹⁰one ^{we} may edify ^{one} another.
20. ¹¹For meat destroy not ^{Overthrow not for meat's sake} the work of God. ¹²All things indeed ^{are pure; are clean;}
13. ^{but it is} ^{howbeit it is} evil for that man who eateth with offence.
21. ^{It is} ^{neither} ^{not} to eat ¹⁴flesh, nor to drink wine, nor ^{any thing to do anything} whereby thy brother stumbleth: ^{or is offended, or is made weak.}
22. ^{Hast thou faith?} ^{The faith which thou hast,} ^{have} ^{it} ^{thou} to thyself before God. ¹⁵Happy ^{is} he that condemneth ^{not himself in that thing which he alloweth.} ^{judgeth} ^{approveth.}
23. ^{And} ^{But} he that doubteth is ^{damned} ^{condemned} if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: ^{for} ¹⁶whatsoever ^{is} not of faith is sin.^a

¹ Matt. 12: 36; Gal. 6: 5.² 1 Cor. 8: 9.³ Vs. 2, 20; 1 Cor. 10: 25;⁴ 1 Tim. 4: 4.⁵ 1 Cor. 8: 7.⁶ 1 Cor. 8: 11.⁶ Rom. 12: 17.⁷ 1 Cor. 8: 8.⁸ 2 Cor. 8: 21.⁹ Ps. 34: 14; Rom. 12: 18.¹⁰ Rom. 15: 2; 1 Cor. 14: 12.¹¹ V. 15.¹² V. 14; Matt. 15: 11; Acts 10: 15.¹³ 1 Cor. 8: 9.¹⁴ 1 Cor. 8: 13.¹⁵ 1 John 3: 21.¹⁶ Tit. 1: 15.^a Many authorities insert here Rom. 16: 25-27.

his sight. No one can lord it over his brother in the Christian church. Each one must define his duty so far as concerns himself. Liberty does not prevent any one from holding decided opinions, and speaking of them, and arguing for them. Liberty is not indifference. Permitting liberty does not endorse all that is permitted.

SECOND. — Vs. 12, 22, 23. "The fullest freedom must be balanced by the fullest sense of responsibility to God." — *Expositor's Greek Testament*. "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ" (v. 10). You must use your liberty in such a way that you are willing to present it before God's pure and penetrating eyes.

22. **Hast thou faith?** Do you really believe that what you are doing is right and approved by God? **Have it to thyself before God.** Rejoice in this liberty of yours in the presence of the Father. "We still keep this joy and strength of liberty even when for love's sake we forego the particular acts from which, if we considered only ourselves and God, we should not be debarred." — *Lyman Abbott*. **Happy is he that condemneth not himself**, who is so convinced that his course is right that his conscience never condemns him, even when he "sits alone with his conscience" amid the manifestations of God's power.

23. **He that doubteth.** Is unsettled in his conscience as to what is right for himself. *Abbott* translates, "He that disputeth with himself." **Is damned**, is condemned, the usual meaning of the Greek word. He has no right to do an act which he feels may injure others. **Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.** "All that a man cannot do remembering that he is Christ's — all that he cannot do with the judgment seat (v. 10) and the cross (v. 15) and all their restraints and inspirations present to his mind — is sin."

THIRD. Toward such persons we are forbidden to have either a censorious or a contemptuous estimate of their character. 13. **Let us not therefore judge one another**, not condemn those who honestly do not see things as we do. We must allow others the

same liberty we ask for ourselves. Condemning as unchristian others who honestly differ from us may be quite as great a sin as that of the one condemned.

BUT NOTE (1) that this does not require one to refrain from arguing against any course as injurious. (2) That the principle does not mean that we should never do anything which others do not like, at which they take offence, or with which they find fault. Nor that in any case should we yield in a duty or a teaching, because some may stumble even over the truth. Even Christ could not so act that none took offence. Paul could not.

FOURTH. — Vs. 13-16. **13. But judge this rather.** That is, turn your judgment to yourselves, and see to it that by your use of your liberty you do not cause others to fall into sin. We are never to give up our liberty of thought and action, but to use it in the right way, as in the verses that follow. **An occasion to fall.** It is contrary to the very essence of the gospel to put a stumbling-block in the way of any, and especially of the weak and tempted.

"He should not run the risk of injuring his brother's conscience, merely for the sake of exercising in a special way the spiritual freedom which he has the happiness to possess whether he exercises it in that way or not." — *Expositor's Greek Bible.*

14. I know, and am persuaded by, rather, as R. V., "in" the Lord Jesus, abiding in his presence and filled with his spirit. In one case troubling the church Paul felt perfectly sure that he was right so far as his conscience was concerned. But he would not cause others, who felt that for them the same act was wrong, to act contrary to their conscience.

It is a great wrong, often thoughtlessly committed against others, to try to persuade them to do what they feel is wrong, no matter how right it may seem to us. We may show them the right course, we may argue with them, but never induce them to do what they feel is wrong.

15. Destroy not him with thy meat, (offered to idols) for whom Christ died. In the spiritual balances, let not the enjoyment even of a right and pleasant thing, to give up which would cost considerable trouble and self-denial, weigh against the salvation and character of any human soul — a soul to save which Christ thought it worth while to die.

16. Let not . . . your good. Your light, your liberty, your freedom of thought, your large views. Be evil spoken of. Because misunderstood, because it led to evil results, thus bringing discredit on the cause, and on the very things that are so good and precious to you.

"For sadder sight than eye can know,
Than proud bark lost, or seaman's woe,
Or battle fire, or tempest cloud,
Or preybird's shriek, or ocean shroud,
The shipwreck of a soul."

But there is one thing sadder than this, — the shipwrecking of the souls of others, the climbing to our own gains over the ruined souls and bodies of our fellow-men.

So Paul declares for himself, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth."

NOTE. This does not mean that the Christian should not do things which others do not like, or even those things which others think are wrong. Paul and Christ himself did such things continually. They did what was right, "though the sky should fall, sun, moon and stars and all," because such things did not cause men to fall into sin, but were intended to save them from sin. The question is not one of opinions, or of likes and dislikes, but of leading others into sin. Dr. Lyman Abbott well says that to make "the weakness of the weak to be an absolute law to the strong would be to forbid all progress, and even all reformation. It would have kept the Christian church always a mere Jewish sect. It would have forbidden the preaching and practices of Luther and of Wesley; for the one was a stumbling-block to the Roman Catholics, and the other to the high churchmen. Sometimes it is a duty to shock prejudices for the purpose of destroying them, as Christ did when he healed the palsied man on the Sabbath and in the synagogue, and ate with publicans and sinners. The doubts of others are not prohibitions to us."

Professor Phelps, in his *Men and Books*, says that when Prof. Edwards A. Park began his great career at Andover "he formed among the students a Shakespeare club for the elaborate discussion of the style, the philosophy, the plots, and the theology of Shakespeare. It encountered so much opposition from timid consciences, in the seminary and out of it, that he thought it necessary to deliver a lecture on 'The Propriety of Studying Shakespeare, and the Special Usefulness of the Study to Ministers.'"

FIFTH. — Vs. 17-21. These verses teach that in our conduct in relation to these questions we must be guided by the great end and aim of living, — to promote the kingdom of heaven in ourselves and in the world. That is the test. Does the act promote (v. 17) righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, or does it hinder the coming of the kingdom?

APPLICATIONS TO TEMPERANCE AND TO CIGARETTES.

1. Every one has a right to his liberty in deciding on all these questions. He should investigate freely, and decide for himself.

2. But in the use we make of this liberty, we must act under the law of love.

We possess not only liberty to use, but also to refrain from using.

In its application to temperance there is an excellent article on this subject by Dr. Trumbull in the *Sunday School Times* of May 7, 1892, the closing paragraph of which is as follows: "In short, even though the Bible does not explicitly command total abstinence as the duty of every child of God, the Bible evidently leaves it free to every child of God to be a total abstainer if he wishes to be; and, therefore, it is for the Christian believer to do, and to deem it his duty to do, that which, in the light of all that he sees and knows, is the best and safest thing to do. Looking around him, every man sees that better men than himself have become drunkards through attempting to be moderate drinkers; and he knows that there is no certainty that he will not drink to excess if he drinks at all, while he is perfectly safe so long as he remains a total abstainer — as he is privileged to remain. Every man sees, moreover, that his example in this matter is sure to influence some who are obviously weaker than himself; therefore, that if he drinks at all, he may lead these persons to drink to excess. Having the choice between drinking and abstaining, and knowing that by drinking he imperils himself and imperils others, while by abstaining he secures safety for himself and for others."

UNCLE SAM AND THE SALOON-KEEPER.

Once Uncle Sam called upon the saloon-keeper, says Amos R. Wells in the *Christian Endeavor World*.

"I have been hearing sad words about you and your establishment," said Uncle Sam, "and I have a big notion to close up your whole business."

Then the saloon-keeper was greatly disturbed, and at once took Uncle Sam out in front of his magnificent building and showed him the throng of men pressing in. "See how well dressed and respectable they are," urged the saloon-keeper. "Why, some of the first families in town patronize my establishment."

Then he showed Uncle Sam the great trains loaded with grain that were rushing toward his distillery, the army of workmen employed in brewery, distillery, and saloon, the great stream of money kept in brisk motion by the enterprise, and a thousand evidences of thrift.

"Why, Uncle Sam," cried the saloon-keeper in triumph, "this industry of mine is by all odds the most important in your entire domain. It keeps hundreds of thousands at work, and if you should shut up my establishment you would ruin the farmers, and the railroads, and the machine-shops, and the laboring classes."

Uncle Sam stood for a little with his chin in his hand, and then he looked up with a sharp eye. "There is a front side and a back side to every business. You have showed me what goes *in* to your establishment. Now will you please show me what comes *out*? I have learned to estimate a business, not by the raw material, but by the product. Conduct me to the rear of your establishment."

But this the saloon-keeper strenuously refused to do. Why? Because he was unwilling to have the products of the saloon seen. They would frighten the young away from his saloon. Thousands of bright men, professional men, prosperous men, transformed into drunkards. Thousands of boys ruined for life. Poverty, vice, crime, sorrows, sickness, pain, early deaths, ruined homes, miseries untold.

BUSINESS MEN'S ADVICE TO BOYS.

Mrs. Zillah Foster Stevens in a small pamphlet, published by the *Sunday School Times*, represents in a pictorial way the testimony of business men against cigarettes by showing the many doors to a prosperous life these men have shut against the boys who use cigarettes, because "the habit is proving itself so destructive to bodily strength, mental keenness, and moral character that our educators, our business men, and our public officials are declaring that their doors must be closed against cigarette users."

Let one who can draw use the blackboard, and produce, door by door, a whole long street of the doors that are closed against cigarette users. The boys will see that these are the doors they will want to enter. The closed doors are drawn and named by different boys or classes. Send for the leaflet, and let the boys read what is said by the twenty-seven business firms named.

An equally effective way of presenting the same idea to the school is to pin a long strip of muslin across the room, and on it fasten, door by door, pictures of the doors that are closed against cigarette users.

Twenty-seven doors that are closed against cigarette users:

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| 1. Athletic clubs. | 15. Ayer's Sarsaparilla Company. |
| 2. A business college. | 16. John Wanamaker's, Philadelphia. |
| 3. Union Pacific Railroad. | 17. Morgan & Wright Tire Company. |
| 4. Omaha schools. | 18. Western Union Telegraph Company. |
| 5. Swift & Co. Packing House, Chicago. | 19. Burlington Railroad. |
| 6. Marshall Field, dry goods, Chicago. | 20. United States Weather Bureau. |
| 7. Life insurance companies (some). | 21. Heath & Milligan. |
| 8. Lehigh Valley Railroad. | 22. Montgomery, Ward & Co. |
| 9. United States army positions. | 23. Academy of Northwestern University, Chicago. |
| 10. United States naval schools. | 24. Telephone company (Cumberland). |
| 11. Carson, Pirie & Scott, Chicago. | 25. New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad. |
| 12. Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad. | 26. Pittsburg & Western Railroad. |
| 13. Central Railroad, Georgia. | 27. West Superior (Wisconsin) Railroad. |
| 14. High schools. | |

TESTIMONY OF BUSINESS MEN.

"I think that this is the best time in the world for the best kind of boys."

"Do employers take more account of the character and habits of the boys whom they employ than they used to do?"

"They certainly do, and this is specially true of the big corporations like the railroads."

"There is no question about that, and in the railroad business most of all. A watch is constantly kept on the boy, and if he is found smoking it counts against him; if he keeps late hours he is at a discount compared with the boy who goes to bed early; if he drinks or gambles it is fatal to him. The railroad men are the greatest force for temperance in the country, and this is not because they are trying to be social reformers, but from strictly business reasons."

"I asked an experienced New York merchant as to his views. He said: 'Several of our leading banks and mercantile houses are making an absolute rule of engaging no clerk who smokes, whether pipes, cigars, or cigarettes. We find that the young fellow who takes to smoking takes to blundering, and idleness, and wasting his time, besides very often going to questionable places of amusement out of office hours. We simply will not take a young man who may be efficient in every other way, but who smokes. If he won't give up tobacco, we give him up. Young men and youths have no need of opiates. A busy, over-taxed merchant or banker may perhaps benefit from a cigar after lunch or at the end of the day's work; but young fellows have no right to drug their energies with tobacco.'"

LESSON IX. — December 1.

THE DEATH OF SAMSON. — Judges 16: 21-31.

READ Judges 13-16. COMMIT vs. 28-30.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Be strong in the Lord, and the power of his might.*

EPH. 6: 10.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Make a study of Samson's character from the three chapters which tell his story, — his possibilities, his qualities, his use of	them, his defects, his influence on the times. Compare with the placing of his name in Hebrews 11 among the heroes of faith.
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HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

The series of scenes in the story of Samson will be especially attractive to the boys and to all the children.

But it is the teacher's part to show them the meaning that underlies the outward form; and how they can use their boyish strength and jollity for good and helpfulness. Samson was a rude chevalier. Rough as he was, he always fought on the right side, often on the unpopular side. Let our boys be polished and cultivated chevaliers and knights, as becomes those living in the twentieth century of Christian light.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Commentaries on the book of Judges, as given under Lesson VII. Robert Tuck's *Revelation by Character*, "Playful Samson." Stanley's *Jewish Church*, 1: 323-331. Prof. Marcus Dod's *Israel's Iron Age*. Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*. One of the very best studies of Samson is by Rev. Ira S. Dodd, in the *Sunday School Times*, on "Samson, a Study in Faith."

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Milton's "Samson Agonistes" is an excellent commentary on the history of Samson.

Whittier's "Wife of Manoah."

Wesley's "Death of Samson."

AGELESS HYMN.

"O God, our help in ages past."

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

I resolve to use all my strength of body and soul on God's side, for the help of others. What shall I do first?

LEARN BY HEART.

I Cor. 16: 13; Eph. 6: 10, 13.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time. — B. C. 1116-1096. During the last part of the period of the Judges, the 40 years of the Philistine oppression of West Israel, 1134-1094, and contemporary with the first 20 years of Samuel.

Place. — If we make Jerusalem and Hebron centers from which to measure, Zorah, the birthplace of Samson, will be 14 miles west of Jerusalem; the valley of Sorek, 2 miles farther west; Timnath, 4 miles south of Zorah; and Ashdod, 20 miles further west near the sea. Hebron is 20 miles south of Jerusalem, and Gaza 36 miles directly west. See colored map.

The tribe of Dan bordered on the north of Judah and west of Benjamin, the line running through Jerusalem east and west.

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Lessons from the Career of Samson.

I. THE SAMSON STORIES.**II. SAMSON AND HIS CHARACTERISTICS.**

His name and family.
His election. His consecration.
Strength. Feats of strength.
Humor. How exhibited.
A fighter. On the right side.
His weakness.

III. THE CIRCUMSTANCES.**IV. HIS WORK.****V. HIS TRAGIC DEATH.**

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

HOME WORK AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The geography.
The contemporaries of Samson.
The circumstances of the times.
Character of Samson.
His deeds of strength.
His practical jokes.
What he accomplished for his country.

I. The Samson Stories. — It seems strange, at first sight, that three chapters of the Bible should be given to the story of such a man as Samson — great, strong, jovial, good-natured, ready to fight, equally ready to play rough jokes and utter witty sayings, with an animal nature overshadowing the spiritual. It is still more strange that in the roll-call of heroes of the faith in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, Samson should be named with Abraham, Gideon, and David, among those "who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions."

There is no other such character in the Bible. He stands out alone amid heroes and saints; in the words of Dean Stanley, "the most frolicsome, irregular, uncultivated creature that nation ever produced." "His quirks and quips," says Dr. Marshall Lang (quoted in Tuck's *Revelation by Character*), "his irony, his grim laughter, as well as his feats of

strength, are duly recorded. The story is strange and pathetic — one over which we smile and sigh, one of boisterous mirth and tearful sorrow — such wit and such folly, such force and such feebleness, comedy so grotesque and tragedy so awful."

But a careful study of Samson and his times will enable us to see that the fact that such a man did a good and useful work makes it worth while to record it.

And all the more because the man was unique, and may be helpful and instructive to others who have talents not usually ascribed to saints.

II. Samson and His Characteristics. — 1. The name Samson is derived from the Hebrew word for "sun," and means "sunny" or "sun-hero." He was born at Zorah in the more southern of the two settlements of the tribe of Dan, on the borders of Judah, 14 miles west of Jerusalem. His father's name was Manoah.

2. Even before his birth his mission was announced. He was to be one who should "begin to save Israel out of the hand of the Philistines," and to this end was to be consecrated to God (Judges 13). It is a great thing for any person to be so endowed and so trained as to have a definite mission in this world. Only partially did Samson fulfil his ideal, but the presence of it influenced his whole life.

3. The consecration of Samson was through the Nazirite vow, which required (Num. 6: 2-6) total abstinence from grapes, wine, and all intoxicating liquors; that the hair should go uncut; and that all contamination with dead bodies be avoided. It was usually a temporary vow, but Samson and John the Baptist were perpetual Nazirites. The meaning of the vow was probably "entire consecration to God."

It is to be noted that, according to the record, Samson, with all his other failings, yet kept sacred the conditions of this vow. On the keeping of the vow his strength and prowess depended.

4. The first and most effective of the endowments of Samson for his mission was his great strength, which, in general, he used to deliver his nation from the power of the oppressor, although not always in the wisest way.

While there may have been no others so strong as Samson, yet examples of great strength in lifting heavy weights and bending bars of iron, etc., take away all improbability from the story.

Samson has often been compared with the Greek Hercules, both on account of his strength and his exploits. The "twelve labors of Hercules" included such feats as strangling the Nemean lion, killing the Lernean hydra, cleaning the Augean stables, and procuring the golden apples of the Garden of the Hesperides. But he had no such persistent purpose as Samson in delivering his people.

Samson's feats of strength were:

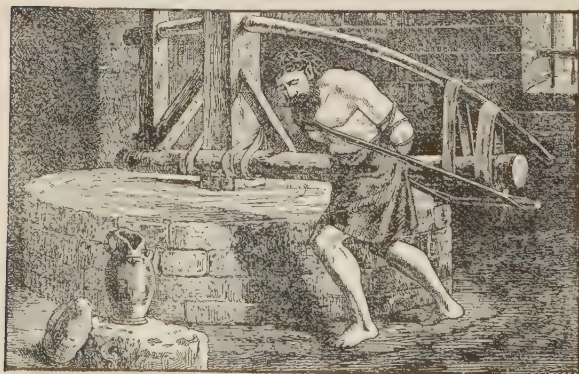
The slaying of a lion with his hands.

The slaying of thirty Philistines.

Another victory over the Philistines.

The breaking of the cords with which his own people bound him to deliver him to his enemies.

The slaying of a thousand Philistines with the jaw bone of an ass.



From an Old Print.

Prisoner Turning a Millstone.

The carrying away of the gates of Gaza.

The breaking of the withes and ropes and loom from Delilah.

The pulling down of the pillars of the Philistine temple.

5. A second special endowment of Samson was his sense of humor, his impulsive practical joking, puns, and riddles. These were an advantage to him even in his efforts to overcome the Philistine oppressors.

Note his riddle from the swarm of bees in a lion's carcass at his

wedding feast; his part in a feast where the seven days were filled up with songs, dances, games, stories, and amusements of all kinds. Samson's riddle was something like the one proposed to Edipus by the Sphinx. "In *Herodotus* 5: 114, we read of bees filling the skull of Onesilus with honey; though Shakespeare says, 'Tis seldom when the bee doth leave her comb in the dead carrion' (*Henry IV., Part II., Act 4.*)"



From Egyptian Monuments.

Egyptians Working at a Loom.

A primitive upright frame, the posts placed in the ground.

The setting on fire of the rich cornfields of the Philistines by three hundred foxes tied two and two by their tails with firebrands between.

His manner of defending the secret of his strength from Delilah.

His compulsory sport for the Philistines, and the method of his final tragedy.

"Nothing could disturb his radiant good humor."

Wit and humor are natural to some men and can be made efficient weapons for good. Some of the most effective blows for righteousness have been struck by humorous songs and caricatures, putting wickedness in comical situations, and turning the laugh against it. Some of the greatest preachers have been made more effective by their wit. "An essential element in the genius of the late Mr. Spurgeon was the gift of humor. No man has ever gained a similar popular influence without the gift of humor. In one of his sermons he says: 'It always makes me laugh when I am called a sour Puritan, because you know there is nobody with a quicker eye for fun, or with a deeper vein of mirth than I have. *At the same time I like to have humor, and anything of cheerfulness and brightness in life, consecrated to God.*'" — *Robert Tuck.*

6. "He was a born fighter. He knew his strength and loved to use it. Nothing stirred him like the joy of battle, unless, indeed, the sweet rewards of victory, its spoils and pleasures. Such men commonly degenerate into mercenary brutes, fighting here or there, on whichever side inclination may be strongest or personal advantage greatest." — *Rev. Ira S. Dodd.*

But it was not so in the case of Samson.

7. His weaknesses were very great. His spiritual nature was not highly developed. He was not a leader or organizer of men. He did his work alone, and not by massing the nation against the oppressor. He was infected with the loose morals of his heathen neighbors. These were a hindrance to his mission, and brought him to blindness, slavery, and an untimely death.

8. But in the main he was firmly on the side of God's people and the fulfilment of his mission. He never broke his Nazirite vows. He was a total abstinence man to the end. "To appreciate the faith of Samson it is necessary to understand the temptations and difficulties in face of which he performed his task. . . . If Samson had cared only for the satisfaction of his course and selfish impulses, the road to an infamous fame would have been wide open. But read his story. You will see that he always fought on one side, — the unpopular, the dangerous, the apparently hopeless side. His conduct is the more remarkable when we remember that his own people wanted no war. They dreaded the disturbance of their groveling peace; he made enemies of his brethren by his persistent and terrible raids upon their enemies; they opposed and feared him almost as much as the Philistines; they even attempted to deliver him up as a peace-offering to the vengeance of their oppressors. He was between two fires all his life, — a lonely champion with relentless foes on the one hand, and, on the other, the cowardly fears of friends. And if he seemed to fight from pure love of fighting, or for the sweetness of revenge, we do him injustice if we do not look beneath the seeming, and see that, in spite of all his waywardness and his easy yielding to temptations of the flesh, he always felt the awful obligation of his vow impelling him to the one terrible work to which the Lord had called him." — *Rev. Ira S. Dodd.*

III. The Circumstances in Which Samson's Work Was Done. — If we would understand Samson and his work we must study the conditions in which he lived. By the following table and the colored map, we can understand Samson's position in the western part of Palestine to which he belonged, a hill country between the highlands of Judah and the rich lowlands of Philistia by the sea. The dates are those common in our Bibles.

WEST ISRAEL.	YEARS.	B. C.	EAST ISRAEL.	YEARS.	B. C.
Oppression of Philistines	40	1134-1094	Oppression of Ammonites.....	18	1134-1116
This period includes the last			Jephthah's judgeship	6	1116-1110
20 years of Eli.....		1134-1114	Ibzan's judgeship	7	1110-1103
It also included the first 20			Elon's judgeship (in part)...	9	1103-1094
years of Samuel.....		1114-1094			
And the judgeship of Samson.....		1116-1096			
	40	1134-1094		40	1134-1094

"In the Maritime Plain on the southwest of Palestine, between the Mediterranean and the hills of Judah, lay a very rich country, 'whose striking and characteristic feature was its immense fields of grain.' This fertile country was held by the Philistines. Their name, from which that of 'Palestine' is derived, means *the strangers* or immigrants. Towards the close of the wild and stormy period of the Judges, the Philistines were the most active and aggressive nation of Palestine. Strong in their military organization, fierce in their warlike spirit, and rich by their position and commercial instincts, they even threatened the ancient supremacy of the Phœnicians of the north. Their cities were the restless centers of every form of activity. Their commerce was widely extended. Their skill as smiths and armorers was noted; the strength of their cities attests their success as builders. But they were pre-eminently devoted to war, alike by sea and land. The Anakims, driven from Hebron, had settled among them. Egypt had been recently invaded by their fleet, and soon after, apparently while Jephthah was struggling with Ammon on the uplands of Gilead, their ships, sweeping from the harbors of Gaza and Askelon, had attacked Sidon, — the great Phœnician city in the north, — defeated its fleet, and taken the town, which henceforth sank into insignificance." — *Geikie*.

The Israelites were afraid of them, and had settled down into an unworthy subservience, and were infected by the example and influence of their heathen neighbors. "Israel, vanquished and dispirited, was under the dominion of the Philistines. . . . It was a time of peace purchased by deepest dishonor. The nation was in danger of extinction. Yet deliverance was preparing. In the quiet cloisters of Shiloh, Samuel, last and greatest of judges, was growing up. The days of the coming kingdom, with its glories and victories, were approaching. Meanwhile Israel must be aroused from disgraceful and perilous slumber. The people must be made to feel that strife is necessary, and made to know that it is not hopeless. The need of the hour was hard blows from a strong hand." — *Rev. Ira S. Dodd*.

IV. Samson's Work and Tragic Death. — Vs. 21-31. Samson's peculiar work was to restrain the inroads of the Philistines, to give the people a better opportunity for development, to encourage them with hope of redress from the Lord, and to prepare them for better times by a new faith in God.

"He was to be an awakening conscience, breaking peace between God's people and their enslavers, sowing seeds of coming strife for freedom, pricking Israel into preparedness for the way of the Lord."

HIS YIELDING TO TEMPTATION led to the end of his career. He became infatuated with an attractive Philistine woman of Sorek, named Delilah, who, by many temptations and blandishments, learned from Samson the secret of his strength. A moment of weakness disclosed to her the fact that it lay in his hair, which, if it were shaved, would leave him a mere common man. "Not that his strength really lay in his hair, for this, in fact, had no natural influence upon it one way or the other. His strength arose from his relation to God as a Nazirite; and the preservation of his hair unshorn was the *mark* or *sign* of his Naziriteship, and a *pledge* on the part of God of the continuance of his miraculous physical powers. If he lost this sign, the badge of his consecration, he broke his vow, and consequently forfeited the thing signified."

21. The Philistines took him, and put out his eyes: instead of putting him to death. "There being in that age no regular prisons, a privative infliction of this nature was resorted to, not only to lessen the chances of escape, but to render the man harmless if

21. ^{But} ^{And} the Phi-lis'tines ^{took} ^{laid hold on} him, and ^a put out his eyes; ^{and} ^{and they} brought him down to Ga'za, and bound him with fetters of brass; and he did grind in the prison house.

22. Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow again ^b after he was shaven.

23. ^{Then} ^{And} the lords of the Phi-lis'tines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Da'gōn their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Sām'son our enemy into our hand.

24. And when the people saw him, they ¹ praised their god: for they said, Our god hath delivered into our ^{hands} ^{hand} our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which ^{slew} ^{hath slain} many of us.

25. And it came to pass, when their hearts were ² merry, that they said, Call for Sām'son, that he may make us sport. And they called for Sām'son out of the prison house; and he made ^{them} sport: ^{before them} and they set him between the pillars.

¹ Dan. 5: 4.

² Judg. 9: 27.

^a Hebrew, bored out.

^b Or, as when he was shaven.

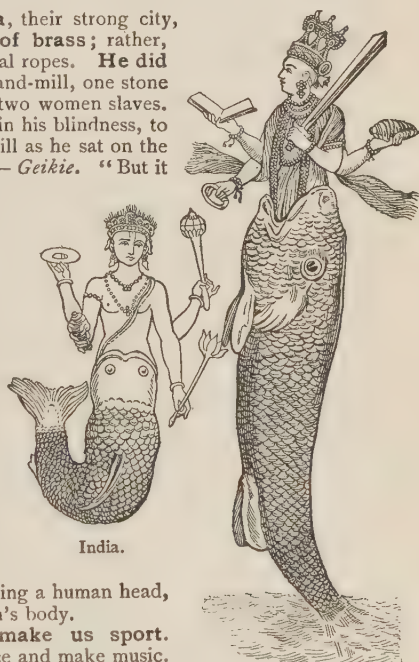
escape should be made." — *Kilto*. To Gaza, their strong city, the "Vanity Fair" of those days. Fetters of brass; rather, "copper." They were afraid to trust the usual ropes. He did grind in the prison house. Perhaps in the hand-mill, one stone turning on another, usually by means of one or two women slaves. "Samson, the fool of women all his life, set, in his blindness, to do a woman slave's work in turning the hand-mill as he sat on the floor, was the very superlative of humiliation." — *Geikie*. "But it is more probable that Samson was degraded to the state of a *beast*, and made to turn such a mill as that alluded to in, say, Luke 17: 2; that is, a mill usually turned by asses or mules." — *Professor Hall*.

22. Howbeit the hair of his head began to grow, parallel with his growing repentance. "With blinded eyes he began spiritually to see; fettered with chains, he became free; under slavish labor he ripened for the freedom of God." — *Lange*.

23. Unto Dagon their god: a sea idol described in 1 Sam. 5: 4 (margin), which exactly agrees with the representations of a fish-god on the walls of Khorsabad, on slabs at Kouyunjik, and on sundry antique cylinders and gems (*Layard's Nineveh*, Vol. II., p. 466; *Nin. and Bab.*, p. 343). In these the figures vary, some having the human form down to the waist, with that of a fish below the waist; others having a human head, arms, and legs, growing, as it were, out of a fish's body.

25. Call for Samson, that he may make us sport. Rather, "that he may play for us," *i. e.*, dance and make music. And they set (or placed) him between the pillars: in full view of the people. He was not made to dance between the two pillars, but to stand there, after the dancing was done, to receive the jests of the lordly feasters.

26. Whereupon the house standeth. According to Dr. Thomson in his *Land and the Book*, Gaza is built on steep hills, and the temple was so built that the two columns stood on the brow of one of the hills, and by merely tearing these away the whole edifice would be precipitated down the hill in ruinous confusion. "Pliny describes two theaters built of



India.

Persian.

From Calmet.

Dagon, the Fish God.

2. Strength, even physical strength, has a real use in the kingdom of God. The athletes in college often have a stronger influence over boys than the best scholar or even professor. It is of the utmost value that they should be pure, clean, Christian men. "When the last of the apostles says, 'I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong' (1 John 2: 14), he uses a word which is exceedingly choice and honorable. Such language is designed to embrace the entire manhood, all the powers of body and mind, all the advantages, physical and intellectual, which youth cherishes, and age begins to surrender."

Self-forgetfulness, says C. S. Robinson, is an essential element in the best use of strength. "No athlete in the games can ever strike a full honest blow with his entire force unless he gives himself utterly up to it with not one thought of the way he is going to look in the photograph of the ring afterwards."

3. The jollity and frolicsomeness of youth, even the tendency to pranks and hazing, become a means of usefulness. Why not make them a means of happiness instead of brutal misery? I remember reading once of a German tutor walking with his pupil and seeing behind the hedge the shoes of a laborer in the field. The pupil proposed to hide them, and watch the perplexity of the man when he could not find them. The teacher suggested a better way, and the rich pupil put a silver dollar in each shoe instead. And they with greater joy watched the poor man as he found this help for his family. Let our wit strike pleasantly. Let us be utterly ashamed to play tricks on the weak or unfortunate.

4. Samson was a temperance man and never broke his vow. He may have seemed an oddity among the Philistines. But he could feel, if not say, like the Scottish chieftain, "Where Macgregor sits, there is the head of the table." "You needn't tell me," observed Uncle Allen Sparks, "that three-fourths of all the misery and crime is caused by whiskey. It's caused by the fools that drink it." — *Chicago Tribune*.

5. Samson's failure in his work was the result of his moral failure, and wrecked his life. "Still, each Samson in this poor sinful world seems to have his Delilah somewhere for a temptation. Great strength invites attack. The devil does not like gigantic leadership when it has a sacred talisman of power and purity on its forehead."

Arthur's greatest knight, Sir Launcelot, became entangled in the shame of deadly sin, and found more bitterly every day that "the taste of sin's corroded fruit is like dust and ashes in the mouth." Sitting alone by a little brook he cries in the deep anguish of moral despair:

" ' Mine own name shames me, seeming a reproach,
For what am I? What profits me my name,
To make men worse by making my sin known,
Or sin seem less, the sinner seeming great.
Then may God,
I pray him, send a sudden angel down
To seize me by the hair, and bear me far,
And fling me deep in that forgotten mere
Among the tumbled fragments of the hills.'
So groaned Sir Launcelot in remorseful pain,
Not knowing he should die a holy man."

To some extent Samson repented and completed his work.

6. God does use imperfect instruments, imperfect men, in his service. There is a place for every kind of person God has created in his service, if each one will consecrate himself to God's work and make the motto of his life the words on the arms of the Prince of Wales — *Ich dien*, "I serve."

LESSON X. — December 8.

RUTH'S WISE CHOICE. — Ruth 1: 14-22.

READ the book of Ruth. COMMIT vs. 16, 17.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.*
RUTH 1: 16.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

Make a study of the book of Ruth in its place in the history of the Judges. What it reveals as to the times, and their place in	the development of the nation and the religion of Israel. Make a character study of Ruth, of Naomi, of Orpah, and of Boaz.
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HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

The last lesson and this are two companion pictures, like the famous ones called "War" and "Peace." In our last lesson we had a hero; in this one, a heroine.

Have the scholars read the whole book through at one sitting.

Name the principal persons.

What does the book teach about the times?

Which is the best character?

What is the best verse?

What do you regard as the best lesson it teaches?

Name all the virtues brought out in the story.

What are the most interesting sentences or expressions in the book?

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

The Expositor's Bible on "Judges" and "Ruth," by Watson. The article on "Ruth" in *Hastings' Bible Dictionary*, and in Dr. John Davis' *Bible Dictionary* (Presbyterian Pub. House). Stanley's *Jewish Church*, Lect. 13. *The New Century Bible*, "Judges and Ruth" (Oxford University Press).

Biblical Idyls, a volume of the *Modern Reader's Bible*, gives this story in good form. But, as to Ruth, its best value is in the introduction upon Biblical idyls and their nature. Matheson's *Representative Men* is excellent upon "Boaz." "Ruth the Gleaner," by Prof. R. G. Moulton, in *Women of the Bible* (1900, Harper's). *Ruth the Moabitess*, by Henry Moorhouse. *Ruth and Esther*, by Dr. Wm. M. Taylor. *Gleanings from the Book of Ruth*. Aubrey Price's *Six Lectures on Ruth*. *Women of the Old Testament*, by R. F. Horton, D. D. W. Braden's *Beautiful Gleaner*. Bishop Oxenden's *Story of Ruth*. Samuel Cox's *Book of Ruth*. Dr. Andrew Thomson's *Home Life in Ancient Palestine*.

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Lines in Dante's *Paradiso*, xxxii., 7-9.

Hood's poem on "Ruth."

"Ruth" in *Dublin University Magazine*.

On the famine see description in Longfellow's *Hiawatha*.

**HOME WORK
AND CLASS DISCUSSION.**

The book of Ruth.

The idyl in the midst of wars.

Character of Ruth.

Character of Boaz.

The two choices.

The rewards of Ruth.

The rewards of good conduct.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 16, 17; Heb. 11: 25, 26; Psa. 84: 10.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Blessed are the sons of God."

"Come, said Jesus' sacred voice."

"Almost persuaded."

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

Will I say to the people of God what Ruth said to Naomi?

PLAN OF THE LESSON.

SUBJECT: Lessons from the Story of Ruth.

I. LIGHT IN DARK TIMES.

II. THE FAMINE AND THE EXILE.

The Bethlehem home.

The famine.

The emigration.

III. THE EMIGRANT'S RETURN.

IV. THE PARTING OF THE WAYS (vs. 7-18).

Orpah's decision.

Ruth's decision.

Decisive choices.

V. THE WELCOME HOME (vs. 19-22).

VI. THE OUTCOME OF RUTH'S CHOICE.

1. Her character and her success.

2. The power of attractive goodness.

3. Boaz, a character sketch.

4. Ruth's greatest reward.

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—Ruth belongs to the times of the Judges, possibly in the time of Gideon, B. C. 1222-1182, or in the early part of the judgeship of Eli, when East Israel was oppressed by Amorites, and West Israel by the Philistines (1134). As she was the great grandmother of David, either date is possible. The dates are the common ones in our Bible. Some scholars place David's date considerably later.

Place.—The early home of Ruth was in Moab, and the later one of Ruth was at Bethlehem, around which so many interesting events cluster.

The early home of Ruth was in Moab, east of the Dead Sea and southern Jordan.

Author.—The author and date of the book are unknown.

Persons.—Naomi, "Winsome"; Elimlech, "My God is King"; Mahlon, "The Sickly"; Chilion, "The Pining One"; Ruth, "The Companion," or "Rose of Moab"; Orpah, a "Fawn"; Boaz, "Lovely," or "Active."

I. Light in Dark Times.—The period of the Judges, as related in the book by that title, was one of wars, lawlessness, desolations, the fury of storm, of revolutions and tragedies; but also of heroic achievements, of great men, of chivalric adventures, and glorious victories.

In the book of Ruth, "a gem of literature so rare as to be priceless," we have a vision of what was going on beneath the storm-tossed surface such as Mrs. Stowe describes in her hymn:

"Far, far beneath, the noise of tempests dieth,
And silver waves chime ever peacefully,
And no rude storm, how fierce so e'er it fieth,
Disturbs the Sabbath of that deeper sea.

"So to the heart that knows thy love, O Purest!
There is a temple, sacred evermore,
And all the babble of life's angry voices
Dies in hushed stillness at its peaceful door."

"The book of Ruth is like some beautiful landscape of Claude, with its soft mellow hues of quiet eventide and the peaceful expanse of its calm lake, placed side by side with some stern picture of Salvator Rosa, exhibiting the shock of armies and the storm of war." "It is like a flower blooming on the edge of a cataract."

This story adds some beautiful features to the picture of the times we find in the Judges. It throws a charming light over those troublous times. Instead of wars and degeneracy, we see piety, love, consecration, happy family life, and domestic virtues. It enables us to see how the nation was on the whole growing better, since in the most degenerate times there was preserved underneath the troubled surface many a pure, loving, religious life, as in the time of Elijah, when the prophet felt that he was the only servant of God in all Israel, while the Lord knew that there were seven thousand who refused to bow the knee to Baal. It was like the springtime when underneath the snows and mud and wind of March the roots and bulbs and seeds are stirring with new life.

II. The Famine and the Exile.—**THE BETHLEHEM HOME.** The scene presented to us lies in the fruitful fields of Bethlehem (House of Bread) six miles south of Jerusalem, famous in later years as the home of David and the birthplace of Jesus Christ. Here we see a family in moderate circumstances, living a simple life of piety and peace, serving God by their daily lives. Their very names show the religious character of the family. The husband was Elimelech, "My God is King"; his wife was Naomi "the Winsome"; the two young sons seem to have been in poor health, as indicated by their early death, as well as by their names, — Mahlon, "the Sickly," and Chilion "the Pining One."

From Burns' "Cotter's Saturday Night" and Gray's "Elegy" make a modern picture of Naomi's early family life.

"From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her loved at home, revered abroad,
Princes and lords are but the breath of kings —
An honest man's the noblest work of God."

THE FAMINE. Upon this charming scene of "homely joys and destiny obscure" disaster came. They did not live "far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife," but were exposed to raids from the Philistines on the west, such as were known in Samson's days (Judg. 13: 1), and the Edomite Bedouins from the south, who "ate up the land like grasshoppers," an "overwhelming scourge." In addition to these, but intensified by them, there arose one of the famines which occasionally afflicted Palestine, and continued for several years.

"All the earth was sick and famished;
Hungry was the air around them,
Hungry was the sky above them,
And the hungry stars in heaven
Like the eyes of wolves glared at them."
— Longfellow's *Hiawatha*, "The Famine."

THE EMIGRATION. Under these circumstances the family found it hard to make a living, all the more because the boys, and probably the father himself, were not very strong; and perhaps they feared the roving bands of invaders. Hence they determined to emigrate to some safer and more fruitful region, even though it would compel them to bring up their children amid heathen surroundings. They went across the Jordan, probably at the fords of Jericho, turned to the south along the eastern shores of the Dead Sea, and settled among

14. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Or'pah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth ¹clave unto her.

15. And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto ²her ^{god's} ^{god:} ³return thou after thy sister in law.

16. And Ruth said, ^a ⁴Intreat me not to leave thee, ^{or} ^{and} to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: ⁵thy people ^{shall he} ^{shall be} my people, and thy God my God:

¹ Prov. 17: 17.

² Judg. 11: 24.

³ Josh. 24: 15, 19; Luke 24: 28.

⁴ 2 Kings 2: 2.

⁵ Ruth 2: 11, 12.

a Or, Be not against me.

the rich fields of the Moabites. Here great changes came to the family. In the course of ten years the sons married Moabitish women, and both sons and Elimelech, their father, died in the land of Moab, leaving the three women widows.

III. The Emigrant's Return. — At length the famine was over. One of the periods of revival and prosperity was shedding its benediction over the land from which Naomi came, and she resolved to return. Poor, in distress, among strangers, she became homesick for her native land, her kindred, the people of God, and the religious aids and consolations of her youth. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks," so panted her soul for the living God and her childhood's home. Everything here reminded her of her loss. "The measure of her misery was pressed down, shaken together, running over."

"This is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things." — *Tennyson*.

She knew not what her reception would be, nor how she would be able to live when she reached Bethlehem. Her heart, too, was sore with the necessity of leaving her beloved daughters-in-law. She could trust in the God of the widow and the fatherless, and say:

"I see not a step before me as I tread the days of the year,
But the past is still in God's keeping, the future his mercy shall clear;
And what looks dark in the distance may brighten as I draw near.

"So I go on not knowing. I would not if I might;
I would rather walk in the dark with God than go alone in the light
I would rather walk with him by faith than walk alone by sight."

IV. The Parting of the Ways. The Two Decisions. — Vs. 7-18. The two widowed daughters-in-law, Orpah, the "Fawn," and Ruth, "the Rose of Moab," went part of the way to see Naomi off, as friends and relatives were accustomed to do, and as is still the custom in the East. When the time came to part, when they had kissed each other and wept together, they both declared they would not return, but would go with her to Israel. "Like a wise woman, she declined to take advantage of the impulse of passionate regret, which seemed adverse to their temporal welfare, and which their cooler judgment might not sanction, and urged them, by many strong arguments, to return." "God wrestled with Jacob with desire to be conquered; so Naomi, no doubt, opposed Ruth, hoping and wishing that she herself might be foiled." — *T. Fuller*. She would have Ruth fully understand her own mind, and realize what the decision would cost her. So in the parable of Christ (Luke 14: 26-33). So Joshua, in his farewell address to his people, when urging them with all his soul to be true to their God, even after their declaration, — "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord," — tells them, "Ye cannot serve the Lord" (Josh. 24: 21).

ORPAH decides to go back to her people. There was little to attract her to a new and strange home, with poverty in prospect, with little hope that she would be welcome to the exclusive Jews, to whom, as well as to her mother, she might become a burden — nothing to attract her except Love and Religion. Neither of these did she possess in a degree sufficient to overcome the obstacles in the way. We do not know whether she returned to the worship of idols or whether she, at least in private, clung to the religion and the God she had learned from Naomi. It is plain that Naomi's personal character and her teachings, shining out through the night of sorrow, had commended to her family and neighbors the religion of the true God.

RUTH, with a deeper nature and clearer insight, with a love to Naomi that would cheer and strengthen her, and a consciousness of her need of God and love to God that made all

17. ^{Where} ^{where} thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: ¹ the LORD do so to me, and more also, ^{if ought} ^{if ought} but death part thee and me.

18. ² ^{When} ^{And when} she saw that she ^a was stedfastly minded to go with her, ^{then} she left speaking unto her.

¹ 1 Sam. 3: 17; 2 Sam. 19: 13; 2 Kings 6: 31.

² Acts 21: 14.

^a Hebrew, *strengthened herself*.

other blessings as nothing in comparison, clave unto Naomi, and, like Mary, chose the good part which shall not be taken away from her.

16. And Ruth said. "Ruth's passionate burst of tenderness is immortal. It has put into fitting words for all generations the deepest thoughts of loving hearts, and comes to us over all the centuries between as warm and living as when it welled up from that pure, heroic soul. The two strongest emotions of our nature are blended in it, and each gives a portion of its fervor — love and religion." — *Maclaren*.

"The quietest of women," says Professor Moulton, "bursts into poetry, and her words are still sung among us as our song of life-devotion."

"Entreat me not to leave thee,
And to return from following after thee;
For whither thou goest, I will go;
And where thou lodgest, I will lodge;
Thy people shall be my people;

And thy God my God;
Where thou diest I will die,
And there will I be buried:
The Lord do so to me,
And more also,
If aught but death part thee and me."

Intreat me not to leave thee, for the very reason that she is old and poor and childless. Their hearts are knit together like the souls of David and Jonathan. The two remind us of Damon and Pythias.

"Love that asketh love again;
Finds the barter naught but pain
Love that giveth in full store
Aye receives as much and more.

"Love, exacting nothing back,
Never knoweth any lack;
Love, compelling love to pay,
Sees him bankrupt every day."

—*Michael Field*.

"That torrent of love swept away all opposition. I daresay that they said little more as they toiled along, two weary women, on the hot road to Bethlehem. Ruth would be silent because she had poured her heart out, and Naomi, because she was drinking in Ruth's spoken love, and both, because they were at rest and had no need to talk.

"There is no need of love for so heroic a type, nor of protestations so vehement, in the ordinary family life of most of us. But how the prose of it would be lifted up, and the essential sweetness of it increased, if our family love was a little less tongue-tied! It is far more often too reticent than too voluble. Feeling may be talked away, but it may also be killed by never being allowed to come to words, and there are more households in America and England robbed of their greatest blessing, recognized family love, by reserve than by gush. If Ruth teaches us the preciousness and nobleness of family affection, that will be the best lesson from her story." — *Maclaren in Sunday School Times*.

We both build from within and attract from without. The secret of the highest power is in uniting the outer agencies of expression with the power that works from within." — *Miss Cocroft*.

"Nor soul helps flesh more now than flesh helps soul." — *Browning*.

"How can I hear what you say when what you are is forever thundering in my ears." — *Emerson*. Unless what you say is the expression of what you are.

Orpah and Ruth, starting together for the promised land, and one returning to idolatry, while the other goes on to immortal blessedness, is paralleled by the characters in the early part of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, where Christian and his neighbors start together for the Celestial City. Christian goes on, while Obstinate and Pliable soon return to the City of Destruction. "It might have been" sums up the tragedy of many a life.

Choices between good and evil, even in small things, are the most important acts of our lives. They are the creative acts of the soul. Often these fateful crises come in our lives in connection with decisions of the importance of which we do not dream. We know what is right; we do not know the far-reaching effects. More frequently in choices than anywhere else do we meet the

10. So they two went until they came to Bēth lē-hēm. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bēth lē-hēm, that ^{all} the city was moved about them, and ^{they} ^{the women} said, ^{2 Is} this Na-ō'mī?

20. And she said unto them, Call me not * Na-ō'mī, call me * Mī'ra: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

21. I went out full, ^{and} the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why ^{then} call ye me Na-ō'mī, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22. So Na-ō'mī returned, and Ruth the Mō'ab-it-ess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Mō'ab: and they came to Bēth lē-hēm ⁱⁿ the beginning of barley harvest.

¹ Matt. 21: 10.

² Isa. 23: 7; Lam. 2: 15.

³ Job 1: 21.

⁴ Ex. 6: 31, 32; Ruth 2: 23; 2 Sam. 21: 9.

^a That is, *Pleasant*.

^b That is, *Bitter*.

"tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

That flood tide is in youth. Most people decide their future life before they are twenty years old. The decisive choice is not made always in view of the consequences, but in view of present right or wrong: often as unconscious of the great change as the sun crossing the line between winter and spring is unconscious: or one seeing the sun cross that line is unconscious of the summer flowers and fruits which will result from it.

"So, from the heights of will
Life's parting stream descends,
And, as a moment turns its slender rill,
Each widening torrent bends."

"From the same cradle side,
From the same mother's knee,
One to long darkness and the frozen tide,
One to the peaceful sea."

V. The Welcome Home. — Vs. 10-22. 19. They came to Bethlehem: in barley harvest (v. 22). Easter time, the latter part of March and first part of April. Bethlehem was the early home of Naomi, which she had left ten years before. Here, too, she had a small estate (Ruth 4: 3). All the city was moved. Bethlehem was a small town (Mic. 5: 2); and in such villages, in an age without newspapers and mails, every event flew from friend to friend with great rapidity. Mrs. Howie, of Mt. Lebanon, Syria, says that even now in her village of 5,000 inhabitants the arrival of a native from America, or even from the Hauran, the region south of Damascus, "is enough to move the people. Their life is so monotonous and quiet, on the whole, that tidings of a new arrival quickly spread. A man has not time to salute his own family before neighbors crowd around him, enter his house, sit down, and pay a long visit, irrespective of his convenience. This is 'attention' on their part, and is responded to by the presenting of sweets, coffee, and pipes by the women folk of the house, who are thus more or less engaged for several days; for, if the person is well known, the whole city will be moved to pay their respects to him." — *Satanstoe School, Toronto*. And they said, *Where is feminine. The women of Bethlehem said.* Is this Naomi? Can this be the Naomi who went away so happily ten years ago?

20. Call me not Naomi, "winsome," "pleasant." That name once belonged to me. Call me Mara, "bitter" (Ex. 15: 25), for this better expresses my condition. For the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. My life is in his hands. He has given me this bitter medicine for my soul. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord."

21. I went out full, *i. e.*, "rich, not in money and property, but in the possession of a husband and two sons; a rich mother, but now deprived of all that makes a mother's heart rich. — bereft of both husband and sons." — *Ann.* The LORD hath testified against me. His home witness against me, that our going away was a sin. The testimony he bore was in the sad results that followed their course. Hath afflicted me. The Jewish writers generally think that they did wrong in leaving their own country to go and live among idolaters. Still, this more likely expresses her feeling rather than the fact.

VI. The Outcome of Ruth's Choice.—

So far we have been reading the introduction to Ruth's romantic love story, a companion picture in common life to the picture in Solomon's song portraying the love of a great king.

It is well to have these two pictures in the Bible gallery, because Home and Holy Love are essential conditions of the transforming this world into the kingdom of God. Home and Love open the gates to Paradise. The star of Bethlehem for the race stands over the Home with Jesus in it.

Let us, therefore, carefully note the second part of the story of Ruth, after having read it again. 1. Ruth found her personal success through her love and devotion to her mother-in-law. She went out into the fields to gather food for her. In all this love and devotion she not only became best fitted for the larger household where she was to reign queen and give Naomi the happiest life possible to her, but it proved the way to that home.



From a Photograph by Bonfils.

In a Wheatfield near Bethlehem.

"The footsteps of her quiet life
Fell on us like the dew,
And good thoughts where her footsteps pressed
Like fairy blossoms grew."

2. She had the attractiveness of goodness and kindness and courtesy and, without doubt, personal beauty and wholesomeness, though the spiritual beauty of her character outshone the physical, and, as it often does, transformed the common into the lovely. This attractive atmosphere of her character, like Mary's precious nard, filled the whole house. It was one of the powers through which her success came.

One of the stories in Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Mayflower* concerns a young lady who used her beauty and personal attractiveness, not to draw others to her, not merely as a means of pleasing, but as a means of helping, warning, saving others.

We can see how Ruth would make her home to be like the Greek Garden of the Hesperides, the Greek paradise far over the Western sea, where Juno placed her wedding present of the branch bearing golden apples, in order that the most precious fruit should grow in the loveliest garden of the world. Over these golden apples she placed as guard the four daughters of Atlas, who sustained the world, and of Hesperis, after whom the daughters and the garden were named. These maidens were named *Æglè*, Brightness; *Erytheia*, Blushing, Modesty; *Hestia*, the Spirit of the Hearth; and *Arethusa*, the Ministering.

3. The character of Boaz, who married Ruth, is worth our studying. The best portrait of this man is furnished by Matheson, the blind Edinboro preacher, in his *Representative Men*. Boaz survives by "the grand old name of gentleman." Like Barnabas, he was "a son of consolation." He was so unconscious of his virtues that, like Moses, "he wist not that the skin of his face shone." He was a gentleman to his employees. He comes into the field and greets them with "The Lord be with you," and from a hundred lips and hearts comes the response, "The Lord bless thee." From *Lorna Doone* we can learn something of what harvest-time in an agricultural community can be like.

The portrait of Boaz is that of a man who filled a narrow niche. He belongs to common life. He is distinguished from other great men of the Bible by the unique smallness of the sphere in which he dwells.

4. The greatest reward both of Boaz and of Ruth arises from the fact that they were the ancestors of King David, the greatest of Israel's kings, and of David's greater Son, Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

"Here we have the Eternal appreciation of every-day virtue and service in the midst of little, ordinary things, and the Divine recognition of these as powers in making the world what God wants it to be. It is meant to teach that in the timidiest breast of timid woman there may reside an energy which affects human life and the destinies of ages more even than clattering arms and clashing armies. . . . And Ruth, bringing into Judah only a woman's heart filled with a wonderful love, was able to do more for the land of her exile than its soldiers spending themselves in battle all along its frontiers."

LESSON XI. — December 15.

THE BOY SAMUEL. — I Samuel 3: 1-21.

READ I Samuel 1-4. COMMIT vs. 8-10.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth.* — I SAM. 3: 9.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

First, from Judges and I Samuel, make a list of the characteristics of the times; and

Second, of the principal persons belonging to that period.

Third. Compare the youth of Samuel with the youth of other persons who began early to serve the Lord, and accomplished a good work.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Bring out the story of the times in which Samuel lived.

Note that this period was one of transition from the Judges to the Kings.

Have the class draw outline maps of the region where Samuel lived and worked.

Have them make a character study of Eli, his sons, Hannah, and Samuel, and find their modern counterparts in history or observation.

PLAN OF THE LESSON

SUBJECT: God's Call to the Young.

GENERAL VIEW OF SAMUEL'S LIFE AND WORK.

CHRONOLOGICAL CHIMES.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

I. THE TIMES IN WHICH SAMUEL WAS BORN.

II. JUDGE ELI AND HIS SONS.

The character of Eli.
The deeds of his sons.

III. THE CALL OF SAMUEL (vs. 2-10).

Birth. Inheritance.
Consecration. Temple work.
The call of God. Calling the young.

IV. SAMUEL ENTERS UPON HIS NEW LIFE (vs. 11-21).

The message.
Samuel's hard duty.
The results.

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 9, 10; Eccl. 12: 1; Matt. 19: 4.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"Hushed was the evening hymn."

"Come, said Jesus' sacred voice."

"I think when I read that sweet story of old."

SPIRITUAL TRAINING BY DECIDING PRACTICAL QUESTIONS.

How does God speak to me?
Will I always say with Samuel, — *Speak, Lord; thy servant heareth?*

LITERARY REFERENCES TO SAMUEL.

James D. Burns' "Samuel and the Voice of God." Mrs. Hemans on Hannah's "Presentation of Samuel." Mrs. Julia Ward Howe's "Speak, for thy servant heareth."

Dr. Bushnell's *Christian Nature*. Pater-son Du Bois' *Beckonings of Little Hands*. Professor Starbuck's *Psychology of Religion*.

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

The book of I Samuel.
The time of Samuel.
Religious condition of the times.
Value of his training in God's house.
His home influences.
How God called Samuel, and calls us.
When is the best time to begin to serve God, and why?

HISTORICAL SETTING.

Time.—Samuel was born B. C. 1146, according to the common chronology; not far from the time of Ruth and Samson in our last lessons.

Place.—Samuel was born at Ramah (hill), called also Ramathaim (the double hill), 4 miles northwest of Jerusalem and 13 miles south of Shiloh.

The house of worship was at Shiloh, the religious capital of Israel, 17 miles north of Jerusalem, and halfway between Bethel and Shechem, 9 or 10 miles from each.

Samuel.—Twelve years old.

Eli.—About 78 years old, high priest and judge.

Jesse, the grandson of Ruth and father

of King David, was born during the boyhood of Samuel.

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Expositor's Bible on "Samuel." *International Critical Commentary* (Scribner's). *The New Century Bible*, "Samuel" (Oxford University Press). *Notes on the Text of Samuel* by Professor Driver. *Cambridge Bible*.

Prof. W. W. White's *Studies in O. T. Characters*. Professor Elmslie's *Expository Lectures*, "Samuel." Matheson's *Representative Men*, "Samuel the Seer." Wharton's *Famous Men of the O. T.*, "Eli, the pious priest, but indulgent parent."

Stanley's *History of Jewish Church*, vol. I.

GENERAL VIEW OF SAMUEL'S LIFE AND WORK.

	B. C.	1 SAMUEL.
EARLY LIFE. Birth to consecration at temple. 2 years.		
1. Birth. Ramathaim.	1145	1: 1-2; 10
2. Consecration to Lord's service. 2 years old. Shiloh.	1143	
3. Hannah's song.		
YOUTH. AT SHILOH. Caring for temple. 2-12 years old.	1143-1134	2: 12-3; 18
1. The faithless sons of Eli.		
2. Samuel's service in the temple.		
3. Samuel's call. 12 years old.		
4. Samuel announces his message to Eli.		
SAMUEL THE PROPHET. 12-32 years old. Shiloh.	1134-1114	3: 19-7; 2
1. Eli judge. 78-98 years old.		
2. The defeat: the Ark captured.		
3. Death of Eli. Aged 98. Shiloh.	1114	
4. Restoration of the Ark.		
SAMUEL THE JUDGE. Aged 32-52. Ramah.	1114-1095	7: 3-10; 27
1. National reform.		
2. Samuel and the defeat of the Philistines.		
3. His annual circuit as judge.		
4. His sons made subordinate judges.		
5. The people desire a king. Samuel's protest.		
6. Samuel meets Saul: anoints him for king.		
7. Samuel summons the people. Saul chosen king. Mizpah.		
SAMUEL THE PROPHET-PRIEST UNDER SAUL. Ramah.	1095-1060	11: 1-25; 1
1. Samuel's farewell address to the people.		
2. Samuel reproves Saul.		
3. Samuel announces Saul's rejection by the Lord.		
4. Samuel founds the school of the prophets.		19: 20; 10: 5, 10-12
5. Samuel anoints David as Saul's successor.		
6. Death of Samuel, aged about 85, at his birthplace, Ramah.		

CHRONOLOGICAL CHIMES.

	B. C.
SAMUEL	
SAMSON was probably a contemporary of Samuel's early life	1149-1059
Trojan War begun	1193
Capture of Troy, of which Homer sings	1184
Eneas landed in Italy	1182
Æolians build Smyrna	1123
Ascanius built Alba Longa in Italy	1152
In Egypt. The Twentieth Dynasty, Ramses IV. to Ramses XII	1167-1090
Beginning of the Twenty-first Dynasty	1090

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

1. The two books of Samuel were originally one, and with the books of the Kings were regarded as furnishing a complete history of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah. 1 Samuel is named in the title in our ordinary Bibles as "otherwise called, the First Book of the Kings"; the two books of Samuel and the two of Kings forming one volume of four books of the Kings.

2. These two books are named after Samuel, not because he was the author, but because he was the principal man of the transition period which they describe, from the rule of the Judges to the rule of Kings.

3. This transition period extended over about one century, from the birth of Samuel (1146 B.C.) to the accession of David to the throne (1055 or 1017 B.C.).

4. The author of the books is unknown; but it is generally agreed that they are a *compilation* from different sources, including the writings of Samuel himself (1 Sam. 10: 25), the book of Nathan the prophet, and the book of Gad the seer (1 Chron. 29: 29; 2 Chron. 9: 29), and the national anthology known as the book of Jasher (2 Sam. 1: 18). The higher critics trace two great sources, written from different points of view, which the editor has contented himself, for the most part, with producing in a twofold form with little effort to harmonize the varying accounts.

5. DATE. According to the *Cambridge Bible* the narrative was compiled as we have it soon after the division of the kingdom (975 or 937 B.C.). *Hastings' Bib. Dic.* (art. "Samuel") assigns one of the component narratives to the ninth century B.C. and the other to the eighth; while the final editor united them B.C. 5 or 4.

1. The Times into Which Samuel Was Born. — V. 1. In order to understand the life and work of Samuel, and especially his boyhood as described in this lesson, it is necessary to realize the moral condition of the times.

1. It was toward the close of the period of the Judges, during which the people had been trained by rewards of obedience and the punishment of disobedience, by religious institutions and the love of God and righteousness in family life, and by the promises of God.

2. During these centuries the people were under a government called the Theocracy, — that is, a condition where God only is king; and, while there were leaders and rulers, there was no political unity except that of the laws and religion of God. There was little compulsory virtue. This was a state of things where true religious and moral life was especially needful for success.

3. The chosen people were approaching a crisis "second in importance only to the Exodus," and there was needed a leader second only to Moses, a counsellor to whom all could turn for advice "amid the wreck of the ancient institutions and the rise and growth of the new."

4. The Philistines were still a menace, not only to prosperity, but also to morals.

Perhaps we can gain some idea of the feeling of the surrounding nations toward the Jews by looking back from the times of Antiochus Epiphanes and his feelings, as described in Longfellow's drama of *Judas Maccabæus*. Antiochus asks Jason:

"Hast thou seen Antioch the Beautiful?"

JASON: "Never, my lord."

ANTIOCHUS: "Then thou hast never seen

The wonder of the world. The city of David

Compared with Antioch is but a village;

And its inhabitants compared with Greeks

Are mannerless boors.

They must be civilized;

They must be made to have more gods than one

And goddesses besides.

They must have hippodromes and games and baths,

Stage plays and festivals, and most of all

The Dionysia. (See Ben Hur's description.)

So shall this Hebrew nation be translated,

Their very natures and their names be changed."

Then follows the description of the torture and death of Málala and her seven sons, because they refused to eat swine's flesh, and repudiate the law of Moses, even when tempted by Antiochus' promise:

"I have sworn to him by all the gods

That I would crown his life with joy and honor,

Heap treasures on him, luxuries, delights, . . .

If he would turn from your Mosaic Law

And be as we are."

And because the Jews refused, and would not be a moral Sodom, he would burn down their city, make it waste as a wilderness, and sow it with salt as Sodom is.

5. The ark, the tabernacle, and the central place of worship were at Shiloh, seventeen miles from Jerusalem. Hither the people came up to the great feasts, and at other times to worship and to sacrifice. In the reign of Saul the tabernacle was at Nob, near Jerusalem

1. And ¹the child Sām'u-el ministered unto the LORD before E'li. And ²the word of the LORD was precious in those days; ^{there was} ^{there was} no open vision.

¹ 1 Sam. 2: 11.

² Psa. 74: 9; Amos 8: 11; v. 21.

(compare 1 Sam. 21: 1 with Mark 2: 26), and during part of David's reign, at Gibeon, also near Jerusalem (*Josephus*) (1 Chron. 21: 29).

The tabernacle "was supplemented by a permanent structure or structures, such as would be needed for the accommodation of the priests and worshippers." — *Professor Beecher*.

And this was "the temple" in which Samuel slept.

6. There was no doubt a good deal of true religion, as revealed in the story of Samuel's parents and the story of Ruth and of Eli. But the conduct of Eli's sons and of Samson shows great looseness of morals pervading the nation. We can realize the condition of morals a little more clearly when we think of the two seemingly contradictory reports which could be made, and are made, of the moral and religious condition of our own time and country, by different persons and papers and books.

1. At that time the word of the LORD, the messages from God through a prophet, was precious, because very scarce. There was no open vision spoken to the people at large, but only personal, individual communion with God.

II. Judge Eli and His Sons.—The character of Eli and of his sons was a further element of the times. Eli was high priest at Shiloh, and became judge when fifty-eight years old, acted as judge for forty years (1 Sam. 4: 18), and died at the age of ninety-eight (1 Sam. 4: 15). He had been judge twenty years when God called Samuel, and was therefore seventy-eight years old, which fact must be borne in mind in judging of his relation to the character of his sons. Eli had many good qualities. He was amiable and kind. "You cannot find one vulgar sin in the venerable high priest." "We find in Eli's treatment of Samuel not rivalry, but nobleness, magnanimity." "He was not self-obtrusive; he was no self-seeker." Eli placed the honor of God and his kingdom beyond his own most precious interests, as is shown by his supreme care for the ark in the day of his calamity (1 Sam. 4: 13, 18). "The Bible holds him up as a great man of God." Wharton's characterization of him as "the weak judge, the pious priest, the indulgent parent, the punished saint, and the dying martyr" lays altogether too much emphasis on his weakness in proportion to his strong virtues, and gives point to Professor Elmslie's saying that "Eli is one of the most unfortunate men in the Bible. We constantly hear him described as a weak, worthless father, a mere worldling, with no heart or soul in him. I think, if he could bring an action for libel against preachers and commentators, he would get enormous damages." "Was his tuition so bad and defective that his sons turned out ill? Who was it that trained the child Samuel,—the strong, powerful Samuel who crushed abuses and corruptions, drove out idolaters, and won battles for Israel?" Was Samuel a weak judge because his sons, too, were so bad that the people were unwilling to have them become his successors? (1 Sam. 8: 3-5.)

At the same time, he had one grievous weakness which led him into great wrong to the nation and to his family. "When he got to be an old man, when his bodily strength was going, when his mental vigor and the energy of his will were sapped, then, under the terrible pressure of adverse circumstances," he failed in government. He allowed his sons, the prospective high priests, to continue in their wilful and public transgressions. They were "sons of Belial"; i. e., men of profligate disposition and conduct. The story of their



From a Photograph.

Ramah, the Early Home of Samuel.

crimes is told in 1 Sam. 2: 12-17, 29. They were covetous, impious, licentious, using their holy office for selfish purposes, robbing the worshipers, profaning the sanctuary, and bringing true religion into contempt with the people. This course they continued many years, in spite of the mild reproofs of their father and the warnings of God through Samuel and another man of God. They hardened their hearts against every good influence. Prov. 1: 24-32 is a life portrait of their character and career.

It was plainly their father's duty to turn them out of office at any and every cost. It was a terribly hard duty, and Eli failed in it. And bitter was his punishment.

While we utterly condemn Eli's course, let us pause before we cast all the stones in our scrip at his head. He was old. His weakness was almost a twin of his amiable virtues; it was hard to stand up against fiery youth; it was hard to depose his own children, and live in their anger; he ever had hope that they would do better; the way of the reformer is always hard, for the very people who condemned him would have been still harder upon him, till they knew the characters of the young men by their actions, for turning them out of office. God and his conscience testified truly to his weakness.

GROWING BAD UNDER GOOD INFLUENCES. So long as there is a free will in man, so long will there be a possibility that the children of the best persons, under the best influences, may turn out to be bad; and the sons of the best business men to be failures in business, the sons of the wisest to become fools. Judas grew worse even under the teachings and example of Christ. At the same time it is true that the better the influences the more hope, and the better the persons may become.

And it is true that the parent or teacher who fails in true and strong discipline loses some of the respect and honor due. My mother used to tell us children that when her father punished his children he made them thank him for the punishment, because if they did not feel thankful at the time, they would in later life.

III. The Call of Samuel.—Vs. 2-10. **SAMUEL'S INHERITANCE.** Samuel was the son of Elkanah and Hannah of the tribe of Levi, the religious and educational custodians of Israel. His parents were religious people, attending the great religious festivals. He was the child of many prayers. Hannah's song in 1 Samuel 2 gives us a good impression of her talent and spiritual power. He belonged to a religious home, which, like the quality of mercy, "is twice blessed; it blesseth him that gives, and him that takes."

HIS CONSECRATION. He was dedicated to God from his birth, and he knew it. He lived under the Nazirite's vow (Num. 6: 1-12; 1 Sam. 1: 11).

ILLUSTRATION. The power of devoting our children in their earliest years to the service of God is well illustrated by the story told by Merivale, in his *History of Rome*, of the famous Carthaginian general, Hannibal. When he was nine years of age, his father Hamilcar proposed to take him on one of his military expeditions, which offer the young Hannibal eagerly accepted. His father then bade him devote himself once for all to the service of his country—Carthage—and with his hand upon the altar to swear eternal enmity to Rome. This dedication in youth determined the course of his whole life.

HIS TEMPLE WORK. Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. "To minister" means *to serve*; a minister is a servant. Samuel performed various services in the house of worship, such as lighting the lamps (v. 3), opening the doors (v. 15), running of errands, and other duties required for the sacrifices and worship. He was also the personal attendant and aid to the aged and dim-sighted Eli, as is implied in his sleeping near him and his readiness to respond to his call. So the young Mark and Timothy ministered unto Paul. While performing the temple service he wore a white linen ephod, after the pattern of the priests' dress in their public ministries. It consisted of two pieces which rested on the shoulders before and behind. They were joined at the top, and girded around the waist. This was worn over his ordinary dress, which was a coat or tunic, reaching down to his feet. This his mother made for him every year (1 Sam. 2: 18, 19).

Unknown to himself, Samuel, by his faithful daily labor, was preparing for the great work of his life. Regular daily tasks are so important a factor in education that a wise man has written a whole book on "Blessed be drudgery," and the culture which comes from drudgery.

The principal of a boys' school presents among the advantages and attractions a course in practical gardening and farming as the best form of the manual training which educators now insist upon as a necessary part of a good education.

One of the best things in those most useful of later institutions, the Christian Endeavor, Epworth League, and other kindred societies, consists in their training of children and young people in work for Christ and the church.

In the words of C. S. Robinson, D. D., one of whose parishioners told me that his real

2. And it came to pass at that time, when E'li ^{was} laid down in his place, ^{and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see; (now his eyes had begun to wax dim, that he could not see,)}
3. And ere ² the lamp of God ^{was not yet gone} out, ³ in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Sām'u-el was laid down to sleep; ^{in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was;}
4. That the LORD called Sām'u-el: and he ^{answered,} Here ^{am} I.
5. And he ran unto E'li, and said, Here ^{am} I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.
6. And the LORD called yet again, Sām'u-el. And Sām'u-el arose and went to E'li, and said, Here ^{am} I; for thou ^{didst call} me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.
7. Now Sām'u-el ⁴ did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.
8. And the LORD called Sām'u-el again the third time. And he arose and went to E'li, and said, Here ^{am} I; for thou ^{didst call} me. And E'li perceived that the LORD had called the child.
9. Therefore E'li said unto Sām'u-el, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Sām'u-el went and lay down in his place.
10. And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Sām'u-el, Sām'u-el. Then Sām'u-el ^{answered,} Speak; for thy servant heareth.

¹ Gen. 27: 1⁷; 1 Sam. 2: 22.² Ex. 27: 21; Lev. 24: 3.³ 1 Sam. 1: 9.⁴ Acts 19: 2.

title was P. G., "Pure Gold": "Young people can be taught to pray, to take the care of some practical schemes of usefulness, to study the Word of God diligently, to contribute money to religious causes, to become interested in the poor, to speak words of counsel and encouragement and warning to such as need direction or assistance. The grand old moralities are always within their reach; fidelities at school, courtesies to the aged, consideration for the weak, keeping the Sabbath, aiding in household cares, and full obedience to all God's commands."

THE CALL OF GOD AWAKENING HIS HIGHER NATURE. According to Josephus, Samuel was 12 years old, the same age as Jesus when he first went to the temple at Jerusalem.

2. **Eli was laid down.** Eli lived in some of the buildings connected with the tabernacle, and Samuel slept not far away, ready for any call from Eli, who was old and partly blind. The lamp of God was probably the golden lamp before the Holy of Holies, which was lighted at sunset, and which burned till morning.

4. **The LORD called Samuel,** and he was awakened by the call. His reply was, **Here am I,** ready for any service. He immediately rose and went to Eli, thinking, of course, that it was Eli who called.

7. **For Samuel did not yet know the LORD.** He did not recognize God's way of speaking to his children. Hitherto he had had no experience. So in Job 33: 14 it is said: "God speaketh once, yea twice, but man perceiveth it not." Often men still fail to perceive the voice of God, and do not believe that God really speaks to men. They are like those whose ears are deaf to certain sounds, or whose eyes cannot distinguish certain colors. But blessed are those who hear God's voice often, and see him everywhere.

8. **At length Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child.** All this would help Eli to ask for and to receive the message from God.

Why did not God speak directly to Eli? Perhaps because he wished to train Samuel to be his prophet; or because Eli had neglected God's message that came through a previous prophet, through conscience, and through providence.

10. **And the LORD came, and stood.** The Hebrew is emphatic, "presented himself." In a vision, or in personal presence as the Angel of the Lord (compare Gen. 18: 17, 20, 21, 33; Judg. 6: 11-14; Rev. 1: 1; 22: 16).

GOD CALLING THE YOUNG. God is calling every child as he called Samuel. It is an individual call, by name, for "he calleth his own sheep by name." God calls (1) by his Word; (2) by his own loving, attractive character; (3) by what he has done for us in

15. And Sām'u-el lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Sām'u-el feared to shew E'li the vision.

16. Then E'li called Sām'u-el, and said, Sām'u-el, my son. And he answered, ^{am} Here ^{am} I.

17. And he said, What ^{is} the thing that *the* LORD hath ^{said} unto thee? I pray thee hide ^{it} not from me: ¹ God do so to thee, and ^a more also, if thou hide ^{any} ^b thing from me of all the things that he ^{said} unto thee.

18. And Sām'u-el told him ^c every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, ² It ^{is} the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good.

19. And Sām'u-el ³ grew, and ⁴ the LORD was with him, ⁵ and did let none of his words fall to the ground.

20. And all Is'ra-el ⁶ from Dān even to Bē'er-shē'ba knew that Sām'u-el ^{was} ^d established ^{to be} a prophet of the LORD.

21. And the LORD appeared again in Shī'lōh: for the LORD revealed himself to Sām'u-el in Shī'lōh by ⁷ the word of the LORD.

¹ Ruth 1: 17.

² Job 1: 21; Psa. 39: 9; Isa. 39: 8.

³ 1 Sam. 2: 21.

⁴ Gen. 39: 2.

⁵ 1 Sam. 9: 6.

⁶ Judg. 20: 1.

⁷ Vs. 1, 4.

a Hebrew, *so add.*

b Or, *word.*

c Hebrew, *all the things, or, words.*

d Or, *faithful.*

cover itself; shall not make atonement for itself. It was too late for anything on Eli's part to save his race from the doom. Every effort to restrain these wicked sons of a good man proved unavailing. Then the doom came, sudden and irresistible. See 1 Samuel 4. The Philistines set themselves in battle array and defeated the Israelites. The ark of God was taken, and Eli on receiving the news fell backwards to his death.

SAMUEL'S HARD DUTY. A very heavy burden was laid upon Samuel, the first of many yet to come. It was both a test and a training for his life-work.

15. Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision. It was a very hard thing for Samuel to make known to the aged Eli the message God had delivered to him. He was so young to seem to reprove one so old. He would have to give great pain to one who loved him and had done much for him. But Eli pressed and even adjured Samuel to tell him all, and Samuel "told him every whit."

God often lays hard duties upon us at the very threshold of the new life. They are needful as a test, a revelation, and a defense; a test to God and man whether we really have given ourselves wholly to God; a revelation of our true condition to ourselves; and a defense against temptation. A French writer has said that a wise attack is the best defense. The same truth is expressed in the proverb about "carrying the war into Africa," derived from Scipio's defense of Rome against Hannibal by attacking Carthage. So now the best defense of the young against intemperance is to set them actively at work for temperance. The best defense against the temptations to any evil is to marshal them to an attack upon that evil. Hence God sets his children to work against evil; he gives them hard duties to perform, hard battles to fight. And this prepares them for their life's work.

THE RESULT is briefly described in vs. 19-21.

19. 1. Samuel grew. He developed physically and morally. He became a true man.

2. The LORD was with him. The source of his strength and fitness for his work.

3. He was so near to God, so filled with his spirit and wisdom, that whatever he said was wise and true and carried into execution. Did let none of his words fall to the ground.

20. 4. His position and work were established.

5. God continued to speak to him, to be with him, to reveal his word to him.

LESSON XII. — December 22.

A CHRISTMAS LESSON. — Matthew 2: 1-12.

READ Matthew 2. COMMIT vs. 10-12.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.* — LUKE 2: 11.

INDUCTIVE STUDY OF THE LESSON.

HOW TO TEACH THIS LESSON.

Probably the facts of this lesson are familiar to most of our scholars. It may be well, therefore, to refresh their memories by a rapid review of the story.

Then we may turn to the meaning of Christmas, why it is celebrated, and our search to find the Saviour, looking for him in the history of the world, and in the world as it is to-day.

If the teachers of younger children will provide pencils and paper and colored crayons, the scholars can draw the two simple diagrams and color the outline maps, while the teacher is explaining their bearing upon the lesson.

Descriptions of the events from literature and pictures will greatly aid the imagination and the memory of scholars.

HOME WORK

AND CLASS DISCUSSION.

Who were the wise men?
The star in the East.
The story of the birth of Christ.
Meaning of Christmas?
What Christ has done for the world.
What was there in Christ that gave him such power for good?

LITERARY REFERENCES.

Proctor's *The Universe of Suns*, "The Star in the East." Longfellow's *Poems*, "The Three Kings." *The Wise Men, Who They Were*, by Prof. Francis W. Upham. *The Star of the Wise Men*, by Archbishop Trench. *The Other Wise Man* is a reverent and beautiful story, by Prof. Henry Van Dyke; so is Rev. Dr. Frederic E. Dewhurst's bright allegorical tale of *The Magi in the West, Their Search for the Christ*.

Whittier's *Poems*, "The Star of Bethlehem": help to a missionary in Persia from the flower by that name.

Lowell's *Poems*, "The Gift of Tritonius." Jeremy Taylor's poem, "They gave to thee myrrh, frankincense, and gold." Margaret Sangster's *That Sweet Story of Old*, "The Star in the East," ending with the poem, "There came three kings at break of day."

LEARN BY HEART.

Vs. 2, 10, 11; Isa. 9: 6, 7; and one or more of the hymns.

AGELESS HYMNS.

"It came upon the midnight clear."
"As with gladness men of old."
"Brightest and best of the sons of the morning."

THE SEARCH FOR JESUS.

THE FINDING OF JESUS.

GIFTS TO JESUS.

I. Draw Out the Story from the Scholars, BY RAPID QUESTIONING CONCERNING THE FAMILIAR FACTS.

Where was Jesus born? (Town, country, continent.)
How long ago? His mother's name?
Who was he before he came to this world?
To whom was his birth first announced?
Who came and sang his welcome?
Repeat the song they sang.
Repeat John 3: 16.
Who were the wise men?
Where did they come from?
What led them to Bethlehem?
What did they find?
What gifts did they bring to Jesus?

GUIDING STARS. Prophecy. Providential preparation. Hunger of the heart. The need of the world. A real star, a visible expression of these unseen, but deeply realized stars.

THEY FOUND. A child. A prophecy. A hope. A fulfilment of promise. The beginning of the redemption of the world. The greatest gift of God to man.

READ. Longfellow's "The Three Kings," beginning

"Three kings came riding from far away,—
Melchior and Gaspar and Baltasar;
Three wise men out of the East were they,
And they travelled by night, and they slept by day,
For their guide was a beautiful, wonderful star."

II. What the Wise Men Would Have Seen Had They Returned after Thirty Years. A. D. 26-30. DRAW THE FACTS FROM YOUR CLASS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE.

1. The Son of God (as shown by his character, teachings, and works).
2. Doing God's deeds: curing sin, disease, sorrow, and death. Name instances.
(*Let one of the class read Whittier's "The healing of his seamless dress."*)
3. Teaching God's heavenly truth.
4. Changing men's lives.
5. An example of the perfect life.
(*One of the class read the hymn, "My dear Redeemer and my Lord."*)
6. Giving his life to save men.
7. Rising from the dead, the proof and power of immortal life.
8. Ever-living King and Redeemer.
(*Read "Brightest and best of the sons of the morning."*)
9. Bestowing the Holy Spirit, at Pentecost and ever since.
10. The life-giving power of the world.

All this in an evil world, under an oppressive government, abounding in wrongs, oppressions, crimes, selfishness, worldliness.

Like a small ray of light in a dungeon, a ray that had the health-giving, life-giving, comfort-giving power of the sun without.

IN THESE THIRTY-THREE OR FOUR YEARS WE FIND THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL FOR REDEEMING THE WORLD.

III. The Effect of the First Christmas Day upon the World. What This Power Has Accomplished.—THE TEST OF POWER. How do we know what any person or thing can do? By what he or it has done.

I look out of my study window and see a number of black wires strung along the street. They look as "dead as a door nail." But every day I hear messages coming over them from near and from far over the telephone. Every night I see blazing lights from the current passing through them. Not long ago a man just over the way touched one of those wires, blown down in a gale, and he was struck dead. I know what those wires can do by what they have done. Therefore, I let them alone in the street, and I turn the switch with perfect confidence when I want a light.

Last summer at Niagara I descended a hundred feet underground in the city power-house, and in a small brick compartment, only a few feet square, saw some black objects like great rolls of iron wire. They seemed as lifeless and innocent as coils of wire in a store. I was told that the power of 70,000 to 100,000 horses resided in those black, dull objects. How could I know? I knew by what they did. I saw the cars moving all over the city, and the streets and houses lighted at night. And all the power and all the light came from those black dynamos.

THE POWER OF CHRIST TESTED. Furnish each scholar with a pencil and paper, and have them draw a line like this one across the page, and let it represent the history of the world from the creation of man to the present time and continued till the kingdom of God shall have come,—a period at least 6,000 years long, and we know not how much longer. It will be five and one quarter inches long. Next draw a line across this history, repre-

Garden
of
Eden



The City
of
God

1. ^a Now when ¹ Je'sus was born in Bēth'lē-hēm of Jū-dā'a in the days of Hēr'od, the king, behold, ^{there came} wise men ² from the east ^{came} to Je-ru'sa-lēm,

2. ^{Saying, 3} Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we ^{have seen 4} his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

3. ^{When} Hēr'od the king ^{had} heard ^{these things, it,} he was troubled, and all Je-ru'sa-lēm with him.

4. And ^{when he had gathered all 5} the chief priests and ⁶ scribes of the people, ^{together, 7} he ^{demanded} of them where ^{the} Christ should be born.

5. And they said unto him, In Bēth'lē-hēm of Jū-dā'a: for thus it is written by the prophet,

6. ⁸ And thou Bēth'lē-hēm, ^{in the} land of ^{Ju'da, art not the} least among the ^{Ju'dah, Art in no wise} princes of ^{Governor, 9} out of thee shall come ^{that} shall ^{be shepherd of} my people Is'ra-el.

¹ Luke 2: 4, 6, 7.

² Gen. 10: 30; 25: 6.

³ Luke 2: 11.

⁴ Num. 24: 17.

⁵ 2 Chron. 36: 14.

⁶ 2 Chron. 34: 13.

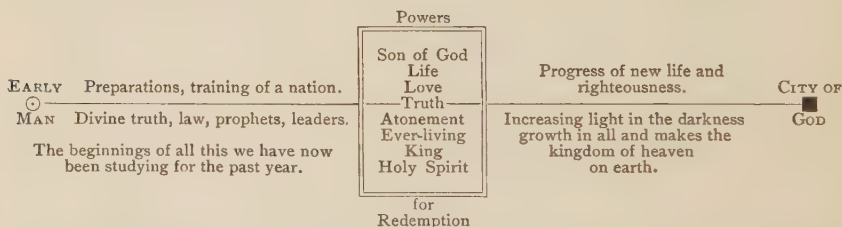
⁷ Mal. 2: 7.

⁸ Mic. 5: 2; John 7: 42.

⁹ Rev. 2: 27.

^a The Fourth Year before the Common Account called Anno Domini.

sending the life of Christ as described above, dividing the whole history of man into two parts. The line must be about one-thirty-second of an inch wide to represent the thirty-three years of Christ on earth, and all the powers which we have seen in that narrow space of history. This line, broad as the years from his birth to his resurrection, is the most definite and distinct dividing event in all history. We have for the past year been studying the development of the world, and what God had done in the early ages to make men good, and transform the world,—divine truth revealed, God's nature, his goodness, his power, his law, rewards for good, punishments for evil, hope, great leaders, great teachers. Let us draw the line of history again, and broaden the dividing line so that we can put into it symbols of the power of Christ:



We see that with Christ came a new era of the kingdom of heaven, with new powers for the changing of this world from the darkness of sin into the righteousness, love, peace, prosperity, and all that makes perfect people in a perfect world. The progress has been slow; but becomes more and more rapid each century. The world as it is to-day tells us what Christ, who was born on Christmas day, has done for the world.

THE TWO MAPS. Let us bring before our scholars another method of showing the above fact. In the volumes containing the United States census are a number of maps or charts showing, by means of varying shades of colors, the degrees in which various things pertaining to our country's welfare prevail in different parts of the land; as, for instance, wealth, ignorance, various diseases, different classes of the population.

Now let the scholars color in the same way two outline maps of the world, of which the eastern hemisphere is given here.

One noting the happiness, comforts, morality, good deeds, benevolent gifts, means of innocent enjoyment, and all that makes life most worth living—the light shades showing the countries in which a large degree of happiness is enjoyed, and the shades growing darker as the blessings grow less.

7. Then Hēr'od, ^{when he had} privily called the ^a wise men, ^{enquired} of them ^{diligently} ^{carefully} what time the star appeared.

8. And he sent them to Bēth'lē-hēm, and said, Go and search ^{diligently} ^{out carefully} the young child; and when ye have found ^{him}, bring me word, ^{for} ^{concerning} that I ^{also} may come and worship him, ^{also}.

9. ^{When they} ^{had} ^{heard} the king, ^{they departed} ^{they went} ^{their way}; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10. ^{When} ^{And when} they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

11. And ^{when} they ^{were come} into the house, ^{they} ^{and} saw the young child with Mā'ry his mother; and ^{they} fell down and worshipped him; and ^{when they had opened} ^{opening} their treasures, ^{they} ^{presented} ^{offered} unto him gifts; gold and frankincense and myrrh.

12. And being warned ^{of God} ^{of God} ⁱⁿ a dream that they should not return to Hēr'od, they departed into their own country another way.

¹ Psa. 72 : 10; Isa. 60 : 6.

² Matt. 1 : 20.

^a Greek, *Magi*.

The other map showing the prevalence of Christianity, the lands where the purest Christianity is most prevalent being represented in white, and the shades darkening as the lands have a less pure Christianity, or less prevalent, down to the blackness of utter heathenism.

By comparing the two maps it will be found that they almost exactly coincide.

The more Christianity, the more happiness; the more of all that makes the kingdom of heaven. The blessings lessen and sorrows multiply in proportion as there is less of the Christian religion. "The new age stands as yet half-built against the sky," but it is Christ that has built the new age thus far, and that building is rising faster and faster each year.

There is a great deal of evil in the world yet, in the best of countries, in the best of people. But it is evil fought against. It is good gaining the victory slowly but surely. The very revelations of evil, the controversies and conflicts, are signs that the power of Christ is working upon the evil, a never ending conflict till the good has triumphed.

THE SUN CONQUERING WINTER. Astronomers are thinking that the planet *Mars is inhabited*. Suppose that this winter a gentleman from Mars should come and make you a visit, being an utter stranger to the ways of this world. You would show him the clean, white, snow-covered ground, the trees beautiful in their branching twigs, "the fringes of the hills," calm, cold sunshine, no mud, no floods, but all peaceful as death. But you tell him that all this is nothing to what is coming next spring, — the snow melted away, the fields covered with green, the trees bursting into leaf and flower, the gardens radiant with color, the air soft with fragrance. A wonderful transformation.

"When does spring begin?" he asks.

"About the 21st of March," you reply.

But when the 21st of March comes, he finds snow and slush and mud and fogs and east winds and bare trees, and he exclaims, as Pliable did to Christian when in the Slough of Despond, "Is this the blessedness you were describing, the beautiful spring you pictured to me with such enthusiasm? Is this what your mighty sun is doing?"

You reply, "These very things you complain of are a proof of the power of the sun, and of the coming of the spring I described. By these things we know that spring is coming. They are a thousand times more hopeful than the silent whiteness of winter." Hence it is that Jesus bade his disciples not to be troubled when they heard of wars and rumors of wars.

"I may not stay to see the day
When the Great Saviour shall bear sway
And earth shall glitter in the ray
That cometh from above.

But come it fast or come it slow —
'Twill come at last, I surely know,
And heaven and earth shall feel the glow, —
And men shall call it love."

WE MAY PERSONALLY FEEL THIS POWER of the coming of Christ. He came to save and change each one of us. He calls us to accept of him as our King, our Leader, and our Saviour. When we give ourselves to Christ we do not always, though sometimes we do, realize the greatness of the change. When of two boys one makes his choice to be-

come an educated man, and the other to live a low and selfish and sensual life, we do not always see a great change or difference immediately in the boys; but as the years go by the difference grows greater and greater.

THE HEART OF THE LESSON.

1. The greatest search in all the world is the search for Christ and his salvation from sin. The Quest of the Knights of the Round Table for the Holy Grail, the quest of the Fountain of Youth by Ponce de Leon, and all the quests for gold the world over are small indeed compared with this quest for Christ.

2. Of all things discovered in the world's history — mines, treasures, new worlds — none compare with the discovery, each in his own experience, of Jesus Christ.

3. The power of Christ in the world is the proof of his power to help and save each one of us.

4. Of all memorial days, the celebration of Christmas by the giving of gifts is the most appropriate, for it celebrates God's greatest gift to each of us and to the world. Sometimes the custom of giving is misused, but it is folly "to burn up the barn to get rid of the rats."

5. Our best gift to God, really our only gift, is the gift of our hearts, our love, our service, our devotion.

"They gave to thee
Myrrh, frankincense, and gold;
But, Lord, with what shall we
Present ourselves before Thy Majesty,
Whom thou redeemedst when we were sold?
We've nothing but ourselves, and scarce that neither,

Vile dirt and clay;
Yet is it soft, and may
Impression take,
Accept it, Lord; and say, this thou hadst rather:
Stamp it, and on this sordid metal make
Thy holy image, and it shall outshine
The beauty of the golden mine."

— *Jeremy Taylor.*

6. We can express our love and gratitude to God by giving to his children, by aiding the cause he has at heart. "Inasmuch as ye have have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

GIVING GIFTS TO OUR KING. Study the following passages and write down the results.

1. *In what way we may give to our king.* By giving,— to the House of God (Ex. 25: 2, 8; 35: 5, 20-29; Deut. 16: 10, 17); to his poor (Matt. 10: 42; 25: 31-46); money (Ezra 1: 2-4); service (1 Chron. 28: 20; 29: 5); ourselves (Prov. 23: 26; Rom. 12: 1); ungrudgingly (2 Cor. 9: 7; Luke 21: 2-4); with the heart (Eph. 6: 6).

2. *The blessedness which belongs to such giving.* Psal. 112: 9; Prov. 3: 9, 10; 11: 24, 25; 22: 9; 28: 27; Eccl. 11: 1, 2; Isa. 58: 10; Hag. 1: 8; Mal. 3: 10-12; Matt. 5: 42; Luke 6: 38; Acts 20: 35; 2 Cor. 9: 6; 1 Tim. 6: 18, 19.

"There came three kings, ere break of day,
All on Epiphany;
Their gifts they bare both rich and rare,
All, all, Lord Christ, for thee:
Gold, frankincense, and myrrh are there,
Where is the King? O where? O where?
O where is the King? O where?

"The star shone brightly overhead,
The air was calm and still,
O'er Bethlehem's fields its rays were shed,
The dew lay on the hill;
We see no throne, no palace fair.
Where is the King? O where? O where?
O where is the King? O where?

"An old man knelt at a manger low,
A babe lay in the stall;
The starlight played on the infant brow,
Deep silence lay o'er all;
A maiden bent o'er the babe in prayer:
There is the King! O there! O there!
O there is the King! O there!"

LESSON XIII. — December 29.

REVIEW.

READ Psalm 98.

GOLDEN TEXT. — *Thou crownest the year with thy goodness.* — PSA. 65: 11.

GENERAL REVIEW OF THE YEAR.

The Period. — From the creation of man to the close of the era of the Judges.

Divisions. — I. CREATION TO THE DELUGE.

II. DELUGE TO THE EXODUS.

Beginning of selected race for religious training.
The Patriarchs.
Joseph.
The Egyptian Bondage.
The Exodus.

III. THE TRAINING IN THE WILDERNESS.

The making of a nation.
God's wonderful deliverance of his people.
The methods of training: By great men, by miraculous food, by divine guidance, by a code of laws, by a religious home and services, by rewards and punishments.

IV. THE REPUBLIC OF GOD. JOSHUA AND THE JUDGES.

The conquest.
The settlement.
The Judges. Note what was done by Shamgar, Barak, Deborah, Gideon, Samson, Jephthah, Eli, Samuel.
The discipline of prosperity and adversity according as the people obeyed or disobeyed God's law.
The gradual development of the nation.

V. THE KINGDOM.

Geography. — Draw a map of the countries known in early times, or note the places referred to in the early history on the maps in the front part of this volume.

Name each country.

Give its modern name and condition.

Name the principal nations. And the chief cities.

State which of these nations and cities were the greatest and most influential, and what their influence has been upon the world.

A most effective Review can be made by means of The Littlefield Outline Political Maps for the study of Old Testament history.

This series consists of fifteen maps which indicate the political situation at different epochs of Hebrew history, and will give the general course of the history by showing the successive political changes.

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A convenient color scheme is: For Egypt, raw umber; desert tribes, a light green; Edom, yellow; Midianites, pink; Moab, burnt umber; Canaanites, medium yellow;

Phoenicia, Indian red; Syrians and the kingdom of Damascus, violet; Zobah, a lighter shade of violet; the Hebrews and Judah, red; Israel, light green; Philistines, gray; Ammonites, gold ochre; Hittites, dark green.

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The Great Men. — Name the twelve men whom you regard as the most noted and influential of all those who have been brought before us during the year.

State one or more things which are especially notable in the life of each one.

The Great Women. — Name the principal women whom we have met during our year's studies, with something characteristic of each one.

The Great Events. — Make a list of twelve greatest events belonging to the period we have been studying.

An Anthology. — A collection of the flowers and gems of the Biblical literature we have been studying.

Tell where each of the following may be found and the circumstances in which they were spoken: —

"Let there be light, and there was light."

"Am I my brother's keeper?"

"For dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return."

"There were giants in those days."

"The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau."

"Unstable as water, thou shalt not excell."

"A land flowing with milk and honey."

"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

"Man doth not live by bread only."

"Showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments."

"Love thy neighbour as thyself."

"What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul."

"He kept him as the apple of his eye."

"As thy days, so shalt thy strength be."

"The stars in their courses fought against Sisera."

"Quiet yourselves like men."

MORAL AND RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS.

What are the greatest and most important truths you can learn from the events of this period?

What from the teachings?

What from the examples?

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